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"'JOHN,' SHE CRIED, PASSIONATELY, 'I WILL NEVER ABANDON YOU!'"

(See page 133.)

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Round the Fire.

IX.—THE STORY OF THE JEW'S BREAST-PLATE.

By A. CONAN DOYLE.



My particular friend Ward Mortimer was one of the best men of his day at everything connected with Oriental archaeology. He had written largely upon the subject, he had lived two years in a tomb at Thebes, while he had excavated in the Valley of the Kings, and finally he had created a considerable sensation by his exhumation of the alleged mummy of Cleopatra in the inner room of the Temple of Horus, at Philæ. With such a record at the age of thirty-one, it was felt that a considerable career lay before him, and no one was surprised when he was elected to the curatorship of the Belmore Street Museum, which carries with it the lectureship at the Oriental College, and an income which has sunk with the fall in land, but which still remains at that ideal sum which is large enough to encourage an investigator, and not so large as to enervate him.

There was only one reason which made Ward Mortimer's position a little difficult at the Belmore Street Museum, and that was the extreme eminence of the man whom he had to succeed. Professor Andreas was a profound scholar and a man of European reputation. His lectures were frequented by students from every part of the world, and his admirable management of the collection intrusted to his care was a commonplace in all learned societies. There was, therefore, considerable surprise when, at the age of fifty-five, he suddenly resigned his position and retired from those duties which had been both his livelihood and his pleasure. He and his daughter left the comfortable suite of rooms which had formed his official residence in connection with the museum, and my friend, Mortimer, who was a bachelor, took up his quarters there.

On hearing of Mortimer's appointment

Professor Andreas had written him a very kindly and flattering congratulatory letter, but I was actually present at their first meeting, and I went with Mortimer round the museum when the Professor showed us the admirable collection which he had cherished so long. The Professor's beautiful daughter and a young man, Captain Wilson, who was, as I understood, soon to be her husband, accompanied us in our inspection. There were fifteen rooms in all, but the Babylonian, the Syrian, and the central hall, which contained the Jewish and Egyptian collection, were the finest of all. Professor Andreas was a quiet, dry, elderly man, with a clean-shaven face and an impassive manner, but his dark eyes sparkled and his features quickened into enthusiastic life as he pointed out to us the rarity and the beauty of some of his specimens. His hand lingered so fondly over them, that one could read his pride in them and the grief in his heart now that they were passing from his care into that of another.

He had shown us in turn his mummies, his papyri, his rare scarabs, his inscriptions, his Jewish relics, and his duplication of the famous seven-branched candlestick of the Temple, which was brought to Rome by Titus, and which is supposed by some to be lying at this instant in the bed of the Tiber. Then he approached a case which stood in the very centre of the hall, and he looked down through the glass with reverence in his attitude and manner.

"This is no novelty to an expert like yourself, Mr. Mortimer," said he; "but I daresay that your friend, Mr. Jackson, will be interested to see it."

Leaning over the case I saw an object, some five inches square, which consisted of twelve precious stones in a framework of gold, with golden hooks at two of the corners. The stones were all varying in sort and colour, but they were of the same size.

Their shapes, arrangement, and gradation of tint made me think of a box of water-colour paints. Each stone had some hieroglyphic scratched upon its surface.

"You have heard, Mr. Jackson, of the urim and thummim?"

I had heard the term, but my idea of its meaning was exceedingly vague.

"The urim and thummim was a name given to the jewelled plate which lay upon the breast of the high priest of the Jews. They had a very special feeling of reverence for it—something of the feeling which an ancient Roman might have for the Sibylline books in the Capitol. There are, as you see, twelve magnificent stones, inscribed with mystical characters. Counting from the left-hand top corner, the stones are carnelian, peridot, emerald, ruby, lapis lazuli, onyx, sapphire, agate, amethyst, topaz, beryl, and jasper."

I was amazed at the variety and beauty of the stones.

"Has the breast-plate any particular history?" I asked.

"It is of great age and of immense value," said Professor Andreas. "Without

being able to make an absolute assertion, we have many reasons to think that it is possible that it may be the original urim and thummim of Solomon's Temple. There is certainly nothing so fine in any collection in Europe. My friend, Captain Wilson here, is a practical authority upon precious stones, and he would tell you how pure these are."

Captain Wilson, a man with a dark, hard, incisive face, was standing beside his *fiancée* at the other side of the case.

"Yes," said he, curtly, "I have never seen finer stones."

"And the gold-work is also worthy of attention. The ancients excelled in——" he was apparently about to indicate the setting of the stones, when Captain Wilson interrupted him.

"You will see a finer example of their gold-work in this candlestick," said he, turning to another table, and we all joined him in his admiration of its embossed stem and delicately ornamented branches. Altogether it was an interesting and a novel experience to have objects of such rarity explained by so great an expert; and when, finally, Professor Andreas finished our in-

spection by formally handing over the precious collection to the care of my friend, I could not help pitying him and envying his successor whose life was to pass in so pleasant a duty. Within a week, Ward Mortimer was duly installed in his new set of rooms, and had become the autocrat of the Belmore Street Museum.

About a fortnight afterwards my friend gave a small dinner to half-a-dozen bachelor friends to celebrate his promotion. When his guests were departing he pulled my sleeve and signalled to me that he wished me to remain.

"You have only a few hundred yards to go," said he—I was living in chambers in the Albany. "You may as well stay and



"IT IS OF GREAT AGE AND OF IMMENSE VALUE," SAID PROFESSOR ANDREAS.

have a quiet cigar with me. I very much want your advice."

I relapsed into an arm-chair and lit one of his excellent Matronas. When he had returned from seeing the last of his guests out, he drew a letter from his dress-jacket and sat down opposite to me.

"This is an anonymous letter which I received this morning," said he. "I want to read it to you and to have your advice."

"You are very welcome to it for what it is worth."

"This is how the note runs: 'Sir,—I should strongly advise you to keep a very careful watch over the many valuable things which are committed to your charge. I do not think that the present system of a single watchman is sufficient. Be upon your guard, or an irreparable misfortune may occur.'"

"Is that all?"

"Yes, that is all."

"Well," said I, "it is at least obvious that it was written by one of the limited number of people who are aware that you have only one watchman at night."

Ward Mortimer handed me the note, with a curious smile. "Have you an eye for handwriting?" said he. "Now, look at this!" He put another letter in front of me. "Look at the *c* in 'congratulate' and the *c* in 'committed.' Look at the capital *J*. Look at the trick of putting in a dash instead of a stop!"

"They are undoubtedly from the same hand—with some attempt at disguise in the case of this first one."

"The second," said Ward Mortimer, "is the letter of congratulation which was written to me by Professor Andreas upon my obtaining my appointment."

I stared at him in amazement. Then I turned over the letter in my hand, and there, sure enough, was "Martin Andreas" signed upon the other side. There could be no doubt, in the mind of anyone who had the slightest knowledge of the science of graphology, that the Professor had written an anonymous letter, warning his successor against thieves. It was inexplicable, but it was certain.

"Why should he do it?" I asked.

"Precisely what I should wish to ask you. If he had any such misgivings, why could he not come and tell me direct?"

"Will you speak to him about it?"

"There again I am in doubt. He might choose to deny that he wrote it."

"At any rate," said I, "this warning is meant in a friendly spirit, and I should certainly act upon it. Are the present precautions enough to insure you against robbery?"

"I should have thought so. The public are only admitted from ten till five, and there is a guardian to every two rooms. He stands at the door between them, and so commands them both."

"But at night?"

"When the public are gone, we at once



"THIS WARNING IS MEANT IN A FRIENDLY SPIRIT."

put up the great iron shutters, which are absolutely burglar-proof. The watchman is a capable fellow. He sits in the lodge, but he walks round every three hours. We keep one electric light burning in each room all night."

"It is difficult to suggest anything more—short of keeping your day watchers all night."

"We could not afford that."

"At least, I should communicate with the police, and have a special constable put on outside in Belmore Street," said I. "As to the letter, if the writer wishes to be anonymous, I think he has a right to remain so. We must trust to the future to show some reason for the curious course which he has adopted."

So we dismissed the subject, but all that night after my return to my chambers I was puzzling my brain as to what possible motive Professor Andreas could have for writing an anonymous warning letter to his successor—for that the writing was his was as certain to me as if I had seen him actually doing it. He foresaw some danger to the collection. Was it because he foresaw it that he abandoned his charge of it? But if so, why should he hesitate to warn Mortimer in his own name? I puzzled and puzzled until at last I fell into a troubled sleep, which carried me beyond my usual hour of rising.

I was aroused in a singular and effective method, for about nine o'clock my friend Mortimer rushed into my room with an expression of consternation upon his face. He was usually one of the most tidy men of my acquaintance, but now his collar was undone at one end, his tie was flying, and his hat at the back of his head. I read his whole story in his frantic eyes.

"The museum has been robbed!" I cried, springing up in bed.

"I fear so! Those jewels! The jewels of the urim and thummim!" he gasped, for he was out of breath with running. "I'm going on to the police-station. Come to the museum as soon as you can, Jackson! Good-bye!" He rushed distractedly out of the room, and I heard him clatter down the stairs.

I was not long in following his directions, but I found when I arrived that he had already returned with a police inspector, and another elderly gentleman, who proved to be Mr. Purvis, one of the partners of Morson and Company, the well-known diamond merchants. As an expert in stones he was always prepared to advise the police. They were grouped round the case in which the breast-plate of the Jewish priest had been exposed. The plate had been taken out and laid upon the glass top of the case, and the three heads were bent over it.

"It is obvious that it has been tampered with," said Mortimer. "It caught my eye the moment that I passed through the room this morning. I examined it yesterday even-

ing, so that it is certain that this has happened during the night."

It was, as he had said, obvious that someone had been at work upon it. The settings of the uppermost row of four stones—the carnelian, peridot, emerald, and ruby—were rough and jagged as if someone had scraped all round them. The stones were in their places, but the beautiful gold work which we had admired only a few days before had been very clumsily pulled about.

"It looks to me," said the police inspector, "as if someone had been trying to take out the stones."

"My fear is," said Mortimer, "that he not only tried, but succeeded. I believe these four stones to be skilful imitations which have been put in the place of the originals."

The same suspicion had evidently been in the mind of the expert, for he had been carefully examining the four stones with the aid of a lens. He now submitted them to several tests, and finally turned cheerfully to Mortimer.

"I congratulate you, sir," said he, heartily. "I will pledge my reputation that all four of these stones are genuine, and of a most unusual degree of purity."

The colour began to come back to my poor friend's frightened face, and he drew a long breath of relief.

"Thank God!" he cried, "Then what in the world did the thief want?"

"Probably he meant to take the stones, but was interrupted."

"In that case one would expect him to take them out one at a time, but the setting of each of these has been loosened, and yet the stones are all here."

"It is certainly most extraordinary," said the inspector. "I never remember a case like it. Let us see the watchman."

The commissionaire was called—a soldierly, honest-faced man, who seemed as concerned as Ward Mortimer at the incident.

"No, sir, I never heard a sound," he answered, in reply to the questions of the inspector. "I made my rounds four times, as usual, but I saw nothing suspicious. I've been in my position ten years, but nothing of the kind has ever occurred before."

"No thief could have come through the windows?"

"Impossible, sir."

"Or passed you at the door?"

"No, sir: I never left my post except when I walked my rounds."

"What other openings are there into the museum?"

"There is the door into Mr. Ward Mortimer's private rooms."

"That is locked at night," my friend explained, "and in order to reach it anyone from the street would have to open the outside door as well."

"Your servants?"

"Their quarters are entirely separate."

"Well, well," said the inspector, "this is certainly very obscure. However, there has been no harm done, according to Mr. Purvis."

"I will swear that those stones are genuine."

"So that the case appears to be merely

opening in the passage. The other through a skylight from the lumber-room, overlooking that very chamber to which the intruder had penetrated. As neither the cellar nor the lumber-room could be entered unless the thief was already within the locked doors, the matter was not of any practical importance, and the dust of cellar and attic assured us that no one had used either one or the other. Finally, we ended as we began, without the slightest clue as to how, why, or by whom the setting of these four jewels had been tampered with.

There remained one course for Mortimer to take, and he took it. Leaving the police to continue their fruitless researches, he asked me to accompany him that afternoon in a visit to Professor Andreas.

He took with him the two letters, and it was his intention to openly tax his predecessor with having written the anonymous warning, and to ask him to explain the fact that he should have anticipated so exactly that which had actually occurred. The Professor was living in a small villa in Upper Norwood, but we were informed by the servant that he was away from home. Seeing our disappointment, she asked us if we should like to see Miss Andreas, and showed us into the modest drawing-room.

I have mentioned incidentally that the Professor's daughter was a very beautiful girl. She was a blonde, tall and graceful, with a skin of that delicate tint which the French call "mat," the colour of old ivory or of the lighter petals of the sulphur rose. I

was shocked, however, as she entered the room to see how much she had changed in the last fortnight. Her young face was haggard and her bright eyes heavy with trouble.

"Father has gone to Scotland," she said. "He seems to be tired, and has had a good deal to worry him. He only left us yesterday."

"You look a little tired yourself, Miss Andreas," said my friend.

His investigation, which lasted all the morning, was careful and intelligent, but it led in the end to nothing. He pointed out to us that there were two possible entrances to the museum which we had not considered. The one was from the cellars by a trap-door



"I WILL SWEAR THAT THOSE STONES ARE GENUINE."

"I have been so anxious about father."

"Can you give me his Scotch address?"

"Yes, he is with his brother, the Rev. David Andreas, 1, Arran Villas, Ardrossan."

Ward Mortimer made a note of the address, and we left without saying anything as to the object of our visit. We found ourselves in Belmore Street in the evening in exactly the same position in which we had been in the morning. Our only clue was the Professor's letter, and my friend had made up his mind to start for Ardrossan next day, and to get to the bottom of the anonymous letter, when a new development came to alter our plans.

Very early upon the following morning I was aroused from my sleep by a tap upon my bedroom door. It was a messenger with a note from Mortimer.

"Do come round," it said; "the matter is becoming more and more extraordinary."

When I obeyed his summons I found him pacing excitedly up and down the central room, while the old soldier who guarded the premises stood with military stiffness in a corner.

"My dear Jackson," he cried, "I am so delighted that you have come, for this is a most inexplicable business."

"What has happened, then?"

He waved his hand towards the case which contained the breast-plate.

"Look at it," said he.

I did so, and could not restrain a cry of surprise. The setting of the middle row of precious stones had been profaned in the same manner as the upper ones. Of the twelve jewels, eight had been now tampered with in this singular fashion. The setting of the lower four was still neat and smooth. The others jagged and irregular.

"Have the stones been altered?" I asked.

"No, I am certain that these upper four are the same which the expert pronounced to be genuine, for I observed yesterday that little discoloration on the edge of the emerald. Since they have not extracted the upper stones, there is no reason to think that the lower have been transposed. You say that you heard nothing, Simpson?"

"No, sir," the commissioner answered. "But when I made my round after daylight I had a special look at these stones, and I saw at once that someone had been meddling with them. Then I called you, sir, and told you. I was backwards and forwards all the night, and I never saw a soul or heard a sound."

"Come up and have some breakfast with me," said Mortimer, and he took me into his own chambers.

"Now, what do you think of this, Jackson?" he asked.

"It is the most objectless, futile, idiotic business that ever I heard of. It can only be the work of a monomaniac."

"Can you put forward any theory?"



"I NEVER SAW A SOUL OR HEARD A SOUND."

A curious idea came into my head. "This object is a Jewish relic of great antiquity and sanctity," said I. "How about the anti-Semitic movement? Could one conceive that a fanatic of that way of thinking might desecrate—?"

"No, no, no!" cried Mortimer. "That will never do! Such a man might push his lunacy to the length of destroying a Jewish relic, but why on earth should he nibble round every stone so carefully that he can only do four stones in a night? We must have a better solution than that, and we must find it for ourselves, for I do not think that our inspector is likely to help us. First of all, what do you think of Simpson, the porter?"

"Have you any reason to suspect him?"

"Only that he is the one person on the premises."

"But why should he indulge in such wanton destruction? Nothing has been taken away. He has no motive."

"Mania?"

"No, I will swear to his sanity."

"Have you any other theory?"

"Well, yourself, for example. You are not a somnambulist, by any chance?"

"Nothing of the sort, I assure you."

"Then I give it up."

"But I don't and I have a plan by which we will make it all clear."

"To visit Professor Andreas?"

"No, we shall find our solution nearer than Scotland. I will tell you what we shall do. You know that skylight which overlooks the central hall? We will leave the electric lights in the hall, and we will keep watch in the lumber-room, you and I, and solve the mystery for ourselves. If our mysterious visitor is doing four stones at a time, he has four still to do, and there is every reason to think that he will return to-night and complete the job."

"Excellent!" I cried.

"We shall keep our own secret, and say nothing either to the police or to Simpson. Will you join me?"

"With the utmost pleasure," said I, and so it was agreed.

It was ten o'clock that night when I returned to the Belmont Street Museum. Mortimer was, as I could see, in a state of suppressed nervous excitement, but it was still too early to begin our vigil, so we remained for an hour or so in his chambers, discussing all the possibilities of the singular business which we had met to solve. At last the roaring stream of hansom cabs and the rush

of hurrying feet became lower and more intermittent as the pleasure-seekers passed on their way to their stations or their homes. It was nearly twelve when Mortimer led the way to the lumber-room which overlooked the central hall of the museum.

He had visited it during the day, and had spread some sacking so that we could lie at our ease, and look straight down into the museum. The skylight was of unfrosted glass, but was so covered with dust that it would be impossible for anyone looking up from below to detect that he was overlooked. We cleared a small piece at each corner, which gave us a complete view of the room beneath us. In the cold, white light of the electric lamps everything stood out hard and clear, and I could see the smallest detail of the contents of the various cases.

Such a vigil is an excellent lesson, since one has no choice but to look hard at those objects which we usually pass with such half-hearted interest. Through my little peephole I employed the hours in studying every specimen, from the huge mummy-case which leaned against the wall to those very jewels which had brought us there, which gleamed and sparkled in their glass case immediately beneath us. There was much precious gold-work and many valuable stones scattered through the numerous cases, but those wonderful twelve which made up the urim and thummim glowed and burned with a radiance which far eclipsed the others. I studied in turn the tomb-pictures of Sicara, the friezes from Kamak, the statues of Memphis, and the inscriptions of Thebes, but my eyes would always come back to that wonderful Jewish relic, and my mind to the singular mystery which surrounded it. I was lost in the thought of it when my companion suddenly drew his breath sharply in, and seized my arm in a convulsive grip. At the same instant I saw what it was which had excited him.

I have said that against the wall—on the right-hand side of the doorway (the right-hand side as we looked at it, but the left as one entered)—there stood a large mummy-case. To our unutterable amazement it was slowly opening. Gradually, gradually, the lid was swinging back, and the black slit which marked the opening was becoming wider and wider. So gently and carefully was it done that the movement was quite imperceptible. Then, as we breathlessly watched it, a white, thin hand appeared at the opening, pushing back the painted lid, then another hand, and finally a face—a face which was familiar to

us both, that of Professor Andreas. Stealthily he slunk out of the mummy-case, like a fox stealing from its burrow, his head turning incessantly to left and to right, stepping, then pausing, then stepping again, the very image of craft and of caution. Once some sound in the street struck him motionless, and he stood listening, with his ear turned, ready to dart back to the shelter behind him. Then he crept onwards again upon tiptoe, very, very softly and slowly, until he had reached the case in the centre of the room. Then he took a bunch of keys from his pocket, unlocked the case, took out the Jewish breast-plate, and, laying it upon the glass in front of him, began to work upon it with some sort of small, glistening tool. He was so directly underneath us that his bent head covered his work, but we could guess from the movement of his hand that he was engaged in finishing the strange disfigurement which he had begun.

I could realize from the heavy breathing of my companion, and the twitchings of the hand which still clutched my wrist, the furious indignation which filled his heart as he saw this vandalism in the very quarter of all others where he could least have expected it. He, the very man who a fortnight before had reverently bent over this unique relic, and who had impressed its antiquity and its sanctity upon us, was now engaged in this outrageous profanation. It was impossible, unthinkable and yet there, in the white glare of the electric light beneath us, was that dark figure with the bent, grey head, and the

twitching elbow. What inhuman hypocrisy, what hateful depth of malice against his successor must underlie these sinister nocturnal labours. It was painful to think of and dreadful to watch. Even I, who had none of the acute feelings of a virtuoso, could not bear to look on and see this deliberate mutilation of so ancient a relic. It was a relief to me when my companion tugged at my sleeve as a signal that I was to follow him as he softly crept out of the room. It was not until we were within his own quarters that he opened his lips, and then I saw by

his agitated face how deep was his consternation.

"The abominable Goth!" he cried. "Could you have believed it?"

"It is amazing."

"He is a villain or a lunatic — one or the other. We shall very soon see which. Come with me, Jackson, and we shall get to the bottom of this black business."

A door opened out of the passage which was the private entrance from his rooms into the museum. This he opened softly with his key, having first kicked off his shoes, an example which I followed. We crept together through room after room, until the large hall lay before us, with that dark figure still stooping and working at the central case. With an advance as cautious as his own we closed in upon him, but softly as

we went we could not take him entirely unawares. We were still a dozen yards from him when he looked round with a start, and uttering a husky cry of terror, ran frantically down the museum.

"Simpson! Simpson!" roared Mortimer,



"THUS HE OPENED NOFTLY WITH HIS KEY."

and far away down the vista of electric-lighted doors we saw the stiff figure of the old soldier suddenly appear. Professor Andreas saw him also, and stopped running, with a gesture of despair. At the same instant we each laid a hand upon his shoulder.

"Yes, yes, gentlemen," he panted, "I will come with you. To your room, Mr. Ward Mortimer, if you please! I feel that I owe you an explanation."

My companion's indignation was so great that I could see that he dared not trust himself to reply. We walked on each side of the old Professor, the astonished commissioner bringing up the rear. When we reached the violated case, Mortimer stopped and examined the breast-plate. Already one of the stones of the lower row had had its setting turned back in the same manner as the others. My friend held it up and glanced furiously at his prisoner.

"How could you!" he cried. "How could you!"

"It is horrible — horrible!" said the Professor. "I don't wonder at your feelings. Take me to your room."

"But this shall not be left exposed!" cried Mortimer. He picked the breast-plate up and carried it tenderly in his hand, while I walked beside the Professor, like a policeman with a malefactor. We passed into Mortimer's chambers, leaving the amazed old soldier to understand matters as best he could. The Professor sat down in Mortimer's arm-chair, and turned so ghastly a colour that, for the instant, all our resentment was changed to concern. A stiff glass of brandy brought the life back to him once more.

"There, I am better now!" said he. "These last few days have been too much for me. I am convinced that I could not stand it any longer. It is a nightmare — a horrible nightmare — that I should be arrested as a burglar in what has been for so long my own museum. And yet I cannot blame you. You could not have done otherwise. My hope

always was that I should get it all over before I was detected. This would have been my last night's work."

"How did you get in?" asked Mortimer.

"By taking a very great liberty with your private door. But the object justified it. The object justified everything. You will not be angry when you know everything — at least, you will not be angry with me. I had a key to your side door and also to the museum door. I did not give them up when I left. And so you see it was not difficult for me to let myself into the museum. I used to come in early before the crowd had cleared from the street. Then I hid myself in the mummy-case, and took refuge there whenever Simpson came round. I could always hear him coming. I used to leave in the same way as I came."

"You ran a risk."

"I had to."

"But why? What on earth was your object — *you* to do a thing like that!" Mortimer pointed reproachfully at the plate which lay before him on the table.

"I could devise no other means. I thought and thought, but there was no alter-



"MORTIMER POINTED REPROACHFULLY AT THE PLATE."

native except a hideous public scandal, and a private sorrow which would have clouded our lives. I acted for the best, incredible as it may seem to you, and I only ask your attention to enable me to prove it."

"I will hear what you have to say before I take any further steps," said Mortimer, grimly.

"I am determined to hold back nothing, and to take you both completely into my confidence. I will leave it to your own generosity how far you will use the facts with which I supply you."

"We have the essential facts already."

"And yet you understand nothing. Let me go back to what passed a few weeks ago, and I will make it all clear to you. Believe me that what I say is the absolute and exact truth."

"You have met the person who calls himself Captain Wilson. I say 'calls himself' because I have reason now to believe that it is not his correct name. It would take me too long if I were to describe all the means by which he obtained an introduction to me and ingratiated himself into my friendship and the affection of my daughter. He brought letters from foreign colleagues which compelled me to show him some attention. And then, by his own attainments, which are considerable, he succeeded in making himself a very welcome visitor at my rooms. When I learned that my daughter's affections had been gained by him, I may have thought it premature, but I certainly was not surprised, for he had a charm of manner and of conversation which would have made him conspicuous in any society."

"He was much interested in Oriental antiquities, and his knowledge of the subject justified his interest. Often when he spent the evening with us he would ask permission to go down into the museum and have an opportunity of privately inspecting the various specimens. You can imagine that I, as an enthusiast, was in sympathy with such a request, and that I felt no surprise at the constancy of his visits. After his actual engagement to Elise, there was hardly an evening which he did not pass with us, and an hour or two were generally devoted to the museum. He had the free run of the place, and when I have been away for the evening I had no objection to his doing whatever he wished here. This state of things was only terminated by the fact of my resignation of my official duties and my retirement to Norwood, where I hoped to have the leisure

to write a considerable work which I had planned."

"It was immediately after this—within a week or so—that I first realized the true nature and character of the man whom I had so imprudently introduced into my family. The discovery came to me through letters from my friends abroad, which showed me that his introductions to me had been forgeries. Aghast at the revelation, I asked myself what motive this man could originally have had in practising this elaborate deception upon me. I was too poor a man for any fortune-hunter to have marked me down. Why, then, had he come? I remembered that some of the most precious gems in Europe had been under my charge, and I remembered also the ingenious excuses by which this man had made himself familiar with the cases in which they were kept. He was a rascal who was planning some gigantic robbery. How could I, without striking my own daughter, who was infatuated about him, prevent him from carrying out any plan which he might have formed? My device was a clumsy one, and yet I could think of nothing more effective. If I had written a letter under my own name, you would naturally have turned to me for details which I did not wish to give. I resorted to an anonymous letter begging you to be upon your guard."

"I may tell you that my change from Belmore Street to Norwood had not affected the visits of this man, who had, I believe, a real and overpowering affection for my daughter. As to her, I could not have believed that any woman could be so completely under the influence of a man as she was. His stronger nature seemed to entirely dominate her. I had not realized how far this was the case, or the extent of the confidence which existed between them, until that very evening when his true character for the first time was made clear to me. I had given orders that when he called he should be shown into my study instead of to the drawing-room. There I told him bluntly that I knew all about him, that I had taken steps to defeat his designs, and that neither I nor my daughter desired ever to see him again. I added that I thanked God that I had found him out before he had time to harm those precious objects which it had been the work of my life-time to protect."

"He was certainly a man of iron nerve. He took my remarks without a sign either of surprise or of defiance, but listened gravely and attentively until I had finished. Then

originals are so carefully imitated that I defy the eye to detect the difference.'

"Then the present stones are false?' I cried.

"They have been for some weeks.'

"We all stood in silence, my daughter white with emotion, but still holding this man by the hand.

"You see what I am capable of, Elise,' said he.

"I see that you are capable of repentance and restitution,' she answered.

"Yes, thanks to your influence! I leave the stones in your hands, sir. Do what you like about it. But remember that whatever you do against me, is done against the future husband of your only daughter. You will hear from me soon again, Elise. It is the last time that I will ever cause pain to your tender heart,' and with these words he left both the room and the house.

"My position was a dreadful one. Here I was with these precious relics in my possession, and how could I return them without a scandal and an exposure? I knew the depth of my daughter's nature too well to suppose that I would ever be able to detach her from this man now that she had entirely given him her heart. I was not even sure how far it was right to detach her if she had such an ameliorating influence over him. How could I expose him, without injuring her—and how far was I justified in exposing him when he had voluntarily put himself into my power? I thought and thought, until at last I formed a resolution which may seem to you to be a foolish one, and yet, if I had to do it again, I believe it would be the best course open to me.

"My idea was to return the stones without anyone being the wiser. With my keys I could get into the museum at any time, and I was confident that I could avoid Simpson, whose hours and methods were familiar to me. I determined to take no one into my confidence—not even my daughter—whom I told that I was about to visit my brother in Scotland. I wanted a free hand for a few nights, without inquiry as to my comings and

goings. To this end I took a room in Harding Street that very night, with an intimation that I was a Pressman, and that I should keep very late hours.

"That night I made my way into the museum, and I replaced four of the stones. It was hard work, and took me all night. When Simpson came round I always heard his footsteps, and concealed myself in the mummy-case. I had some knowledge of gold-work, but was far less skilful than the thief had been. He had replaced the setting so exactly that I defy anyone to see the difference. My work was rude and clumsy. However, I hoped that the plate might not be carefully examined, or the roughness of the setting observed, until my task was done. Next night I replaced four more stones. And to-night I should have finished my task had it not been for the unfortunate circumstance which has caused me to reveal so much which I should have wished to keep concealed. I appeal to you, gentlemen, to your sense of honour and of compassion, whether what I have told you should go any farther or not. My own happiness, my daughter's future, the hopes of this man's regeneration, all depend upon your decision."

"Which is," said my friend, "that all is well that ends well, and that the whole matter ends here and at once. To-morrow the loose settings shall be tightened by an expert goldsmith, and so passes the greatest danger to which, since the destruction of the Temple, the urim and thummim have been exposed. Here is my hand, Professor Andreas, and I can only hope that under such difficult circumstances I should have carried myself as unselfishly and as well."

Just one footnote to this narrative. Within a month Elise Andreas was married to a man whose name, had I the indiscretion to mention it, would appeal to my readers as one who is now widely and deservedly honoured. But if the truth were known, that honour is due not to him but to the gentle girl who plucked him back when he had gone so far down that dark road along which few return.



(Front view)

THE NEEDLE LYING AS IT LIES AT ASSUAN, EGYPT.

(Rear view)

The Story of Cleopatra's Needle.

FROM SYRENE TO LONDON.

BY SUSIE ESPLAN.

IN London, on the embankment of the Thames, standing majestic in its great height and solidity, is that wonderful column of red granite known to all as Cleopatra's Needle.

What a history is attached to the obelisk, a history which is as wonderful and strange as the Needle itself is antique, for its age dates back as far as 1,500 years before the Christian Era. We are told that "the child Moses may have played around the foot of this pillar; the Israelites looking citywards from the brickfields saw the sunlight glittering on its tapering point; the plague of darkness clothed it as with a garment; the plague of frogs croaked and squatted on its pediment; the plague of locusts dashed themselves in flights against it, and unto its likeness the heart of Pharaoh was hardened. The sight of it takes us back to a time when the Pisgah—sight of Canaan—was but a promise with a desert and forty years between." Connecting the history of the pillar with such ancient Biblical facts as these, we realize how really aged the Needle is; but we have still to remember that it had been witness to events which

took place many hundreds of years even before the days of Moses.

When Thothmes III., called Egypt's greatest King, was in power he gave command for another pair of obelisks to be cut out of the quarries at Syrene and erected by the side of those already standing, which Rameses had set up before one of the many temples of the Sun which were in Heliopolis.

Gazing thoughtlessly at the column one is prone to overlook the fact that this tremendous pillar is unlike other equally high columns in our land, as this one was not built up to its present height by stone being laid upon stone or block being placed upon block, until the desired height and form were attained, but from the first this was hewn out of its place in the quarry in one enormous mass. We can, therefore, understand the difficult undertaking it would be to remove such a weight of granite from one place to the other in the days when steam was not in use. The quarries of Syrene were seven hundred miles from Heliopolis. In an interesting book on this subject written by the Rev. James King (and to him I am indebted for much of this information), we have an account of how in

those early times the task of cutting out and removing this column was effected.

He tells us that in an old quarry at Syrene there is to be seen an obelisk upon which the workmen were busy, when for some reason they were obliged to leave it only partially cut out. From this it appears that when the quarrymen wished to abstract a huge mass, such as the Needle would be, they marked out the form by cutting a deep groove, in which, at intervals, they made oblong holes. Into these holes they firmly wedged blocks of timber, and then, filling the grooves with water, the wood in time swelled and thus the granite cracked along the outline from wedge to wedge. Next came the difficulty of taking the Needle on its first journey, seven hundred miles up the river to the City of Heliopolis. When it lay ready for removal in the quarry, rollers made of palm trees were laid so that the column could be placed on them, and by this means it could be pushed down to the edge of the river, and there a raft was built round it. When the Nile overflowed its banks, this raft and its burden floated, and the stone was conveyed to the nearest and most suitable point from which it could again be conveyed on rollers as before to the pedestal which was prepared for it to stand upon, and by the help of ropes and levers made from the date palm it was placed in position. So faultless was the work done by those men of old that, when the column was erected on the pedestal, both had been so accurately levelled, where the one fitted on the other, that the Needle when standing was perfectly true in the perpendicular.

Mr. King continues to inform us that in a grotto at El-Bersheh is a representation showing the removal of a gigantic figure. The statue is placed on a sledge, and men are represented going before it pouring oil in grooves, along which the sledge slides, and by means of ropes

four rows of men drag the figure along. And from this we learn the method of the column's first removal. Once erected in Heliopolis before one of the many temples of the Sun, the Needle was allowed to remain there with its companion one for fourteen centuries.

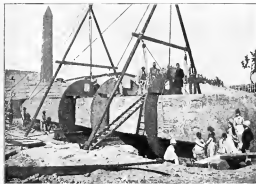
Twenty-three years before Christ, Augustus Cæsar ordered the removal of them from Heliopolis to Alexandria, and so the Needle came to be taken on its second journey. In Alexandria was a gorgeous palace of the Cæsars, and before the palace the columns were set up. They are called Cleopatra's Needles, but in reality Cleopatra had no connection with their history. She may have helped to design the magnificent building the front of which these obelisks adorned, and her devoted subjects wishing to give honour to the memory of their much-loved Queen gave the pillars her name.

For fifteen centuries they were left to stand in this last-named position, which was close to the Port of Alexandria; and many years after the grand building of the Cæsars had fallen in ruins, these two columns still stood. With years the sea had advanced to the base of the one in which we are more especially interested, and with the ever-advancing and receding waters the foundation of the Needle became so worn that three hundred years ago it fell to the ground unbroken and unharmed.

In 1801 the French and English fought, and the latter, under Sir Ralph Abercrombie,



FIGURE SHOWING THE REMOVAL OF THE NEEDLE, IN ORDER TO BUILD THE PYRAMIDS, UNDER THE EGYPTIAN KING, 1800.



[Front]

ERECTING THE FRAMEWORK.

[Photo]

were victorious. The battle having taken place within sight of the Needle, the English soldiers conceived the desire to possess and take to England the fallen obelisk as a trophy of their success. So anxious were they to have this idea carried out, that they willingly gave up some of their payment, and collected £7,000 towards the expense of its removal.

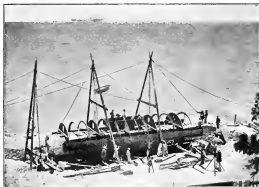
The plan they adopted for its conveyance to England on this occasion was to build a pier seaward, and then, taking the Needle to the end of it, proposed putting it through the stern of an old French frigate which had been raised for the purpose. When the pier was partially built a great storm washed it away, and very soon after that the soldiers were ordered to leave Egypt, and the idea could not be carried out. However, the Needle was removed a few feet, and a brass tablet was inserted bearing a record of the

British victory. From this time the mind of the people appeared to be in a state of unrest concerning the Needle—an unrest which was not quieted until the column was brought to England and erected where it now stands.

When George IV. was reigning in England, Mehemet Ali was ruling in Egypt, and he offered as a gift to the King this obelisk.

George IV. for some reason did not accept the gift. When William IV. came to the throne it was again offered, with an additional favour, for he also promised to pay the cost for its transportation. King William, like his predecessor, King George, thought it best to excuse himself from accepting the obelisk, so he also refused it.

In 1849 the question was brought before the House of Commons, that the offer made by Mehemet Ali should be re-considered and the obelisk brought to England, but an



[Front]

PUTTING ON THE CAIRING.

[Photo]

opposition party opposed the suggestion, considering that the Needle would have become so defaced as to be not worth the risk and expense of removing it.

Many years after, when the great Hyde

English to remove it if they really valued its possession, otherwise they ran the risk of losing it altogether. In 1867 Sir James E. Alexander was attracted by the beauty of the column which was also presented



(From a)

CONSTRUCTING THE CARGO.

(Photo.)

Park Demonstration was being held, it was again suggested that the obelisk should be transported, in honour of the Prince Consort, for his anxiety in trying to make the exhibition a success, but the idea again fell through. When the Sydenham Palace Company were planning their great pavilion they wished to have the Needle to place in the Egyptian department of the building, of course intending to pay for its transit. But it was against order to give a private company any gift which really belonged to the nation.

The Needle all these years was still lying where the British Army left it, on the shore of the Bay of Alexandria. The ground on which it lay was sold, and a Greek merchant who had bought the land was anxious to have the column taken away. The Khedive advised the

by Mehmet Ali to the French, and stands now in La Place de la Concorde. Remembering that the one belonging to the English was lying unheeded on the shores of Alexandria, he desired to have it brought over to England, and accordingly went to Egypt, gained an interview with the Khedive, and with him discussed its possession and removal. For ten years he was unwearied in his watch over the monument, arranging



(From a)

THE CARGO FINISHED.

(Photo.)



[Front]

PREPARING TO LAUNCH.

[Photo]

from time to time with the owner of the land to allow it to remain where it was, hoping meanwhile to be able to make some arrangements concerning it so that it might be preserved for the English.

He came to the opinion that if ever the obelisk was to be brought to England it would not be at the expense of the nation's purse, but would need to be paid for by private donations. With one or two friends, anxious like himself for the protection of the Needle, he intended to try and raise funds in the City. However, first meeting his friend, Professor Erasmus Wilson, and explaining all to him, the Professor generously offered to pay the sum of £10,000, which was deemed sufficient for the purpose.

In July of 1877 workmen were once more busy in connection with this column which already had experienced such a history. The sand was removed from about it, and to the delight of those most inter-

acquaintance of Mr. John Dixon, a civil engineer, and he, too, was interested in the monolith. Professor Erasmus Wilson and Mr. Dixon were introduced and discussed the subject together, with the result that Mr. Dixon undertook the responsibility of the conveyance of the column to England, Professor Wilson arranging to pay the £10,000 on its erection in London. A construction was therefore carefully designed in England for encasing the Needle, so that it would be a sea craft of itself, and this was sent out to Egypt in pieces.



[Front]

THE FIRST ATTEMPT AT LAUNCHING.

[Photo]

ested it was found to be in an excellent state of preservation. Next came the anxious task of removing it, something more being necessary than the raft, as of old, for the long sea voyage which lay before it.

A paper might be written on the different methods and numerous plans invented and suggested for the transportation of the Needle. Sir James Alexander had made the



[From a]

THE NEEDLE IN ACTION.

[Photo.]

One of the principal considerations when making their designs was that the Needle when encased required to be launched by being rolled into the water, instead of being sent off in the usual way. Another of the chief difficulties to contend with in the removal of the obelisk was that the bay near which it was lying was unsafe for ships to anchor in, as it was exposed to severe gales and the ground was covered with shoals. The Needle was raised some feet above the ground, the smaller end swung round to be parallel with the sea, and when in this position the work of encasing it was done.

When in this act of turning it, the ground appeared to be giving way under it, and, on examination being made, it was found to be resting on a small vault, which was 6ft. long by 3ft. wide and 4ft. high. It was evidently an ancient tomb, for two human skeletons and some small jars were found in the cavity. The skulls were preserved and put

preserve the stone when being rolled into the water, or in case of any deflection in the vessel's length, which might occur through the waves. The casing was made water-tight, and the greatest care had to be taken to have the column quite in the centre of the cylinder, where it was fastened in position.

For the purpose of getting it into the water, large wooden wheels, 16½ ft. in diameter, were put on either end, and planks were laid for it to roll down. From heavy lighters lying in the bay, wire ropes were taken and wrapped many times round the cylinder. Also from the land side ropes

on board the pontoon, when ready for sea, but after the storm in the bay they were never seen again, and the sailors, being foreign, are supposed to have thrown them overboard, through superstition.

The Needle whilst raised and ready for encasing had the plates riveted in place round it, the inside was packed with elastic timber cushions to



[From a]

AT THE DECK.

[Photo.]



[Photo.]

REPAIRING THE HOLE MADE BY THE DOCK

[Photo.]

were secured to it, in case, when set in motion, it went off at too great a speed, and thus the ropes could check that fault. On August 28th, 1877, all was ready for the launch. Unfortunately, the morning commenced with a thick fog, which only cleared away as the day wore on.

A great crowd of people gathered to witness the interesting event. All being in readiness, the winches on board the lighters worked the ropes connected with the encased Needle, and it commenced to gradually move towards the water, but the movement was so slow that it could scarcely be detected. After some hours it had only made one complete turn on its wheels. It was then proved that the vessels from which the wire ropes were worked were not able to hold their ground against the strain, but were dragging their anchors. Two tugs which had been standing by in readiness to give help if required were called into service, and being

connected with the cylinder towed it until she moved a little farther into the water, but although the tugs steamed at full power they could not move the heavy weight at any great speed. The planking ended by an incline into the water, and divers had been previously employed in removing shoals from the intended course to prevent any mishap. When the cylinder was brought to the edge of the railway, so to call it, the idea was that it would roll down the incline and slip off easily into the water.



[Photo.]

LAUNCHED.

[Photo.]

All the first day was employed in bringing it to the foot of the incline, and at night it was left in no greater depth of water than 3ft. Next morning the tugs again were at work trying to move it into deep water, but

the water to rush in and fill the cylinder. It took some days to repair the damage made by the rock, but after that was done it was successfully floated and towed round to the harbour, where final arrangements were made



[Press.]

PUTTING ON THE TOP-FETTERIA IN DOCK.

[Photo]

after making one full revolution it stuck, and although the tugs continued to tow all day it remained immovable.

On the third day divers discovered that a hidden stone weighing half a ton had pierced the plates, and making a hole had allowed

for the sea voyage. A cabin house and rail were fixed on top, two bilge keels 40ft. long were riveted one on either side, a mast and rudder placed, and twenty tons of iron ballast were put in her. It was manned by a crew of five Maltese and an English captain.



[Press.]

FAREWELL TO ALEXANDRIA.

[Photo]

The time occupied from beginning to encase it until the completion was about three and a half months.

A suitable steamer of sufficient size and power was found in the ss. *Olga*, belonging to Messrs. Wm. Johnson and Co., of Liverpool. The craft, which was named the *Cleopatra*, was now ready for sea. It was designed not to travel faster than five or six knots an hour, as greater speed might be disastrous. The *Olga*, towing the *Cleopatra*, set sail from Alexandria on the 21st September, 1877.

For the first twenty days all was prosperous and uneventful, but on the morning of Sunday, the 14th October, when in the Bay of Biscay, a squall arose, which towards noon developed into a gale. The *Cleopatra*, however, stood the gale well, not shipping enough water to do any serious harm until about six o'clock on the evening of the same day, when a big sea caught her, turning her completely on her beam ends and carrying away her mast.

A desperate effort was made to right her, but without success; a small boat was lowered, but to no purpose, and the captain of the *Olga* at this point, seeing the danger all were in, thought it wisest to disconnect the two vessels, and so the cylinder was cut adrift. A little later, the wind having fallen, the *Cleopatra* signalled for assistance, and the crew of the *Olga*, pitying the distress of their fellow-sailors, volunteered to put off in a boat and go to their rescue. The captain, thinking it would be a fruitless effort, advised them against it, saying: "A boat could not live in such a sea." The second officer, who had all along taken a keen interest in the welfare

of the *Cleopatra*, replied: "We can't leave the poor fellows to drown; and now, lads, who will go with me?" He found five fine able-bodied men, in the prime of life, were willing to share the risk, and a boat was launched and put off; but before they could render any assistance a great wave washed them away, and they were thus drowned in endeavouring to save others.

After a time a line was thrown from the *Olga* over the *Cleopatra*, and by means of it a boat was hauled from the one vessel to the other, and the sailors on the Needle were saved. After spending some hours in searching for signs of the lost boat and the *Cleopatra*, the captain of the *Olga* set sail for Falmouth, with the sad news of the enforced abandonment in the Bay and the supposed loss of the Needle and men.

When the news was heard in England, Mr. Dixon was of opinion that the Needle would not sink when cast off, but would float, the only danger

being that she might be destroyed on rocks. His surmising was correct in reference to it floating, for a telegram was received sixty days after the news of its loss saying that the ss. *Fitzmaurice*, bound for Valencia from Middlesbrough, had found and captured it ninety miles north of Ferrol, and had towed it into Vigo in Spain, and it remained in that harbour about three months.

Sir James Ashbury, M.P., kindly offered the loan of his yacht, the *Esther*, to tow it home, but arrangements were finally made for the *Anglia* to do the work, and she arrived in England with the obelisk in tow on the 20th January, 1878.



ON THE TRANS-EMBARCMENT.

From a Photo kindly lent by C. H. Mohr, Esq., Sculptor of Sphinxes and Pedestal.

Ivanka the Wolf-Slayer.

By MARK EASTWOOD.



HE Prince threw the reins to his servant and sprang from the sledge.

"Where is he?" demanded he.

The Muzhik in the doorway of the hut stood bowing to the ground. He did not presume to lift his eyes to the High Noble, but they had flashed up like

come to see the little one who slew the wolf. At least," he added quickly, with a shrug, "so they say, but I do not believe it. Why, it is impossible! A child—a mere puppy!"

The Muzhik had thrown out his hands. He could contain himself no longer. "The High Noble does not believe?" he cried, wildly. Then he rushed into the house to



"IVANKA, MY LITTLE ONE, SLEW THE WOLF."

signal-fires at the words. Yet he affected not to understand.

"Is it the old man, Ivan Ivanovitch, the High Noble would honour with his commands?" he began. "His servant is full of regret——"

"Bother Ivan Ivanovitch!" interrupted the Prince, impatiently. "What do I want with your father? It is Ivanka, your son, I

return in a moment brandishing in one hand a knife, and in the other holding aloft a shaggy hide.

"The Noble Prince does not believe?" he repeated, and his eyes seemed to emit sparks. "Let him behold the proofs. Ivanka, my little one, slew the wolf, in very truth! Alone—alone he slew it!"

As though a flash of electric fire had flown

from the man's lips direct to the hearts of his listeners, the faces of both flamed up. The man in the sledge lifted his cap and crossed himself with fervent mutterings. He passed the cuff of his coat across his wet, shining eyes.

The Prince took the knife in his hand. Such a thing it was! You can buy the like for twenty copeks (about sixpence) at any Russian fair. One of the sort used by the Russian peasant to cut forage, having a crooked blade and horn handle. It was stained, both blade and hilt, with blood.

"I have bought another for use," observed the peasant.

"It is wonderful," murmured the Prince, as he turned the knife about in his hands.

At this juncture a pair of excited black eyes, surmounted by a huge *baranka*, peered round the corner of the hut, and as quickly vanished.

Presently the Prince looked up. "But the boy!" he cried. "Let us see this wonderful child and hear the story from his own lips."

The peasant looked sharply round.

"He was here even when the High Noble drew up. There is the hatchet and the wood he was chopping. Ivanka! Ivanka! He has hidden himself, the rascal."

The Prince laughed.

"Ivanka! Ivanka!" almost shrieked the peasant. "I will teach you to run and hide when the High Nobility come from far and near to see you! By all the saints, if you do not instantly come forth from your hiding-hole and relate the whole occurrence to the Noble Prince, I will break every bone in your body!"

Then it was that a coat of sheep's skin that just cleared the ground emerged from behind the hut and moved slowly over the trodden snow to within a few paces of the Prince. You could only tell by the shining eyes and the tip of a small red nose that peeped between the high stand-up collar that inside of it was a small boy.

Where he stood the blood-red sun bathed him in heroic glory. Yet, in spite of all, Ivanka the Wolf-Slayer had the mien of a fruit-stealing culprit before the *Chinovnik*. The Prince regarded him with mock severity.

"What is this I hear of you, Ivanka?" he began. "They say that you have slain a wolf!"

Ivanka would have hung his head but that his collar prevented it. So he dropped his eyes in guilty silence. The peasant,

behind the Prince's back, rubbed his hands and chuckled.

"Come here," commanded the Prince, his moustached lip twitching with a whimsical smile.

The coat moved to the Prince's feet. Then the small boy inside it felt himself caught up in strong arms and borne into the hut.

Now, though it was a ruddy winter sunset outside, in the hut it was quite gloomy. The window was very small. A dull yellow glow, like a big bull's-eye, came from the open door of the stove, and a glimmer like a glow-worm from the tiny lamp that burned before the Holy Image. The dim outline of a woman with a child in her arms could be discerned by the stove. She came forward as the Prince entered, and bending low raised the hem of his fur mantle to her lips and silently returned to her seat.

The Prince sat by the window, and Ivanka stood between his knees where he had been placed. He trembled inside his sheep's skin. Yet it was a gentle hand that lifted the *baranka* from his curly head and raised his chin.

"How old are you, Ivanka?" inquired the Prince.

"Ten years, Noble Prince," faltered the boy. But his eyes meeting those of the Prince at that moment he ceased to tremble. And the longer he looked the more comfortable he felt.

"And you have slain a wolf?" continued the Prince.

"Yes, Noble Prince."

"And what had the wolf done to you, Ivanka, that you should have taken his life?"

"He had seized our little Minka and would have eaten her up." Ivanka drew a sharp breath.

"How terrible!" exclaimed the Prince. "But you—midge! How did you dare to tackle such a foe? It is incredible! Come, tell me all about it. Begin at the beginning, Ivanka."

Ivanka gazed at the ground in silence. He twisted one leg round the other, cracked all his knuckles in succession, but the words would not come.

"Speak, Ivanka, do," came a woman's coaxing voice from the gloom. "Tell his High Nobility how it happened."

Another pause, and at length in a shy, hesitating voice, Ivanka began:—

"Mother had gone to the town in the sledge, and father lay asleep on the top of the stove. It was afternoon. I was minding

Minka, and we played at having a shop with the bits of pot from the mag Minka broke. Then I remembered it was time to cut the fodder and feed the beasts, which I can do as well as father now. So I took the fodder knife and stole out. I left the door open a bit—not enough to let the cold in on father, but enough to hear Minka if she cried. I had fed the cows in the byre and had got to the corner of the house coming back, when I heard Minka scream."

As Ivanka uttered the last word his breath came fast. He tossed back his locks with a sudden jerk of the head. Like a gladiator preparing for combat, he threw out his chest, setting his teeth, whilst his small, muscular fingers contracted, doubling in like the claws of a falcon. Forgotten was the princely presence with that piteous appeal smiting his ears.

"I sprang forward," he continued, "and

strength came to me, and with a yell I threw myself upon him."

"You were not afraid?" put in the Prince, who had never taken his eyes off the boy since he began to speak.

"I did not think of fear," replied Ivanka, "I thought of my poor little Minka, and oh, how fiercely I hated the monster. Hate kills fear," he added, reflectively.

"And then?" inquired the Prince.

"Oh, then he dropped Minka, and over and over we rolled in the snow, he snarling and worrying my sheep's skin. He would soon have made an end of me but for my sheep's skin." And the boy patted his breast and looked himself over complacently.

"And after?" the Prince again recalled him.

"After that he shook me until my bones rattled in my skin. Then I was under him and my mouth was full of his hair, and I was



"I SPRANG FORWARD."

saw Minka. She was on the ground just outside the door. And over her hung a monster, grim and terrible. His wicked eyes gleamed red, and his cruel teeth were long and sharp. I saw them as he lifted his bristling lip to seize her in his jaws."

A dry sob rose in Ivanka's throat and made him pause. He coughed it impatiently away.

"It seemed to me then—just for a moment of horror—as though my limbs were bound and I could not move, until the beast began to drag Minka away. At the sight

so spent that I would have let him finish me. But Minka cried, 'Ivanka! Ivanka!' and it seemed too hard to leave her. It was that moment I remembered that I still grasped the knife."

"How I struggled round between his mighty paws until my arm was free to plunge the weapon in his throat I know not, but I felt the blood gush out over my face. And then—and then, Minka's voice went farther and farther away and I seemed to be falling as a star falls through the air."

As Ivanka ceased speaking, a half-stifled

sob was heard from the interior of the room. The Prince had covered his eyes with his hand as though dazzled. Yet the sun had gone down and the place was more gloomy than ever. The peasant stepped forward out of the shadows and stood before the Prince

the Prince still held him between his knees. Even when he rose to go, the High Noble detained the boy with a hand on his head.

"Give him to me," he said to the peasant. "Let me take him with me when I go to



"I STRUGGLED BOUND UNTIL MY ARM WAS FREE."

in the dim light of the window. He took up the tale.

"It was the screams of the little one that awoke me, your High Nobility, and I ran out. Ah, never shall I forget the sight that met my eyes! There lay my little son, dabbled in blood, and beside him the wolf on its back, kicking in death convulsions. When I picked up my Ivanka I thought him dead, and my heart would have broken had he not at once opened his eyes.

"Minka," he whispered, 'is she hurt?'

"My darling, no," I answered. 'She screams too lustily to be hurt.'

"And the wolf?" He raised his head from my shoulder and looked wildly around.

"He is dead. You have slain him, my hero," I assured him.

"Then he shut his eyes with a great sigh.

"Let me sleep, father," he murmured. 'I am so tired.'

The peasant chuckled. "He was played out, my little wolf-slayer. The Noble Prince should have seen how he lay like a sack, and slept and slept!"

Meanwhile Ivanka had grown shy again and gazed wistfully towards the door. But

Petersburg. I will make a great man of him. He shall be a soldier and fight for the Czar."

There was dead silence. The peasant's face had gone crimson. His eyes flew to his son and held him in jealous regard.

"Will you go with me, Ivanka, you wolf-slayer, to help keep the human wolves from invading the dominions of the Czar? You shall be taught with the sons of the highest in the land, and shall wear the uniform of an Imperial cadet."

Ivanka raised solemn eyes to the face that was bent towards him. It was a noble face, handsome and benign, and imposing against the swelling sable of the high collar.

"He is great and good and beautiful, like my patron saint, Ivan," he thought. Something stirred in the gloom of the hut, and quickly Ivanka turned to where his mother sat with the sleeping Minka in her lap. His lip began to quiver.

The peasant found his tongue. "Give him time, Noble Prince," he faltered, huskily, and he too looked towards the crouching figure by the stove. "It is a great thing the High Noble offers, but the boy is very young."

"Take your time," replied the Prince. "In the spring I shall return. Then, since you are sensible people, he will be ready to go."

With these words the great man stooped and kissed Ivanka, pressing a roll of notes

was to him as though a bright noontide sun had suddenly dropped from the heavens. And there and then a feeling of longing after greater things crept into his valiant little heart.

"You shall decide for yourself, my son,"



"THE GREAT MAN PRESSED A ROLL OF NOTES INTO HIS HAND.

into his hand. From the door Ivanka watched the Prince depart. He gazed after the fine sledge with its prancing horses as they sped, swift as the wind, towards the wonderful, mysterious city of the Great Czar. When it had disappeared and the merry jingle of the silver bells no longer reached his ear it

said the peasant. And the mother hid her grief because she wished Ivanka to be a great man.

Thus it was that when the spring came to stir the sap in the trees and release the ice-bound brooks, at the return of the Prince, Ivanka was ready to go.

In Nature's Workshop.

II.—FALSE PRETENCES.

By GRANT ALLEN.

HUMAN life and especially human warfare are rich in deceptions, wiles, and stratagems. We dig pitfalls for wild beasts, carefully concealed by grass and branches; we take in the unsuspecting fish with artificial flies, or catch them with worms which conceal a hook treacherously barbed for their surer destruction. The savage paints his face and sticks feathers in his hair so that he may look more terrifying to his expected enemy; civilized men mask their batteries, and sometimes even paint muzzles of imaginary guns in the spaces between the gaping mouths of the real ones. *Clemons de frise* block the way to points liable to attack; real troops lie in ambush and dart out unexpectedly

occur among fairly well-known English plants and animals. And I shall begin with our familiar and unsavoury old friend, the Devil's Coach-horse.

In order fully to understand his mode of procedure, however, I must first call your attention to another animal which really *is* what the Devil's Coach-horse mendaciously pretends to be: and that is the common scorpion. His mode of fighting is well known to most of us. In illustration No. 1 Mr. Enock has given us a delineation of a frantic death-struggle between such a scorpion and a large and powerful southern spider. The venomous creature with the stinging tail is on the left; the spider is on the right. As far as mere size goes, the antagonists are fairly well matched; but the



1.—A BATTLE REAL: SCORPION V. SPIDER: THE SCORPION STRIKING.

in the rear of the assailants. Trade in like manner is full of shams—a fact which I need hardly impress by means of special examples. But Nature we are usually accustomed to consider as innocent and truthful. Alas, too trustfully: for Nature too is a gay deceiver. There is hardly a device invented by man which she has not anticipated: hardly a trick or ruse in his stock of wiles which she did not find out for herself long before he showed her.

I propose in this paper to examine a few cases of such natural deceptions—not indeed the most striking or typical, but such as

scorpion is the best armed, both with offensive and defensive armour. His lobster-like or crab-like claws enable him to hold his enemy's limbs in his grip as in a vice: then, at the critical moment, he bends over his tail, in the extremity of which his sting is situated, and plunges it with force through the comparatively slight skin of the spider's body or thorax, injecting at the same moment a pungent drop of his deadly poison. This characteristic action of the scorpion in curving its tail over its body and raising its sting in a menacing attitude is well known to birds and other

enemies of the species: often the mere threat of a thrust is a sufficient deterrent: the dangerous beast just elevates its poisonous appendage or assumes an angry mien, and the inquisitive intruder is frightened away immediately. It is the same with ourselves. The bare sight of that uplifted sting suffices to repel us. Even a child who saw a scorpion once arch its back and prepare to strike with its reversed tail would instinctively understand that there was danger ahead, and would withdraw its hand before the venomous creature had time to pounce upon it.

Owing to these unamiable personal traits of the scorpion race, it is not popular among other animals. But to be feared is to be respected; and scorpions for the most part are left severely alone, under the stones where they love to lurk, by the various denizens of the districts they inhabit. Now, it is a fact in nature as in human life that to be successful is to have many imitators. Thus a number of harmless flies dress up like wasps in black and yellow bands, and so escape the too pressing attentions of insect-eating birds and other enemies. They have no stings, to be sure, but they look so like the wasps, and flaunt about so fearlessly in their borrowed uniform, that they are universally taken for the insects they mimic; even the cautious entomologist himself stares at them twice and makes quite sure of his specimen before he ventures to lay hands on any such doubtful masquerader. I hope in a future article to give some further account (with illustrations) of these facts of *mimicry*, as it is called: for the present we will stick close to our text, the Devil's Coach-horse. For

this familiar English beetle is an imitator of the scorpion, and obtains immunity from the attack of enemies to a great extent by pretending to powers which are not his in reality.

In No. 2 we have a portrait of the Coach-horse in his hours of ease, seen from above, engaged in doing nothing in particular. He does not look like a flying insect, but he is. He has a long pair of wings tucked away in folds under his horny wing-cases, and he can use them with great effect, for he is one of our swiftest and strongest fliers—the long-distance champion, I almost fancy, among the beetles of England, unless indeed the tiger-beetle be pitted against him. But



2.—THE DEVIL'S COACH-HORSE IN HIS HOURS OF EASE

when crawling on the ground, and attacked or menaced, he does not take to flight or show the white feather: being a pugnacious and spirited little beast, he bristles up at once, and endeavours incontinently to terrify his assailant. In No. 2 you see him from above when he is merely engaged in crawling along the ground, looking as mild as milk, and as gentle as any sucking dove: you would hardly suppose he could show fight or raise his hand—I mean his antennae—to injure anyone. But in No. 3 he is represented in his favourite act of attacking a caterpillar: for he is really a very voracious and contagious carnivore. In the autumn, when Devil's Coach-horses are usually most abundant, you can easily catch them by putting a piece of meat or a

dead frog under an empty flower-pot, and then tilting the edge up with a stone, so that the beetles can crawl in and get at the food thus temptingly laid out for them.

If you disturb the Coach-horse, however, while he is engaged in eating



3.—THE DEVIL'S COACH-HORSE SAMPLING A CATERPILLAR.

his quiet meal, or even when he is walking at leisure along a country road, he puts himself at once into his "terrifying" attitude, and imitates the scorpion. No. 4 exhibits him in this military character, cocking up his tail and pretending he can sting—which is only his brag; he just does it to frighten you. But the attitude is so exactly like that of the scorpion, that it almost always produces an immediate effect: hardly anybody likes to molest a Devil's Coach-horse. If you put down your hand to touch him, and he rears in response, ten to one you will withdraw it in alarm at sight of him. In England these beetles often enough find their way into larders or cellars, seeking whom or what they may devour; and when the servants light upon them, they almost invariably decline to touch them: there is a general opinion about that the ugly and threatening black beasts are uncanny and poisonous, or else why should they turn up their tails at you in such an insulting fashion?

"But," you may object, "there are no scorpions in England: how then can the Devil's Coach-horse be benefited by imitating an animal which he has never seen, and of whose very existence he has not been able to read in pretty picture books?" Your objection has some force—though not so much as you imagine. It is quite true that there are no scorpions in England; but then, there are Devil's Coach-horses in many other countries, and the habit of tail-cocking need not necessarily have been acquired in these islands of Britain. That is not all, however: it suffices the beetle if the tactics it adopts happen to frighten and repel its enemies, no matter why. Now, in the first place, many of our migratory birds go in winter to Southern Europe and Africa—especially the insect-eaters, which can find no food in frozen weather. The hard-billed seed-eaters and fruit-eaters remain with us, but the soft-billed kinds retire to warmer climates, where food is plentiful. Of course,

however, it is just these insect-eating birds that the Devil's Coach-horse has most to fear from. The birds must be quite familiar with the habits and manners of scorpions in their southern homes; and they are not likely to inquire closely whether the dangerous beast they know on the Mediterranean has, or has not, been scheduled in Britain. We all of us dislike and distrust any insect that resembles a bee or wasp, and that buzzes or hums in a hostile manner; we give all such creatures a wide berth, wherever found, on the bare off-chance that they may turn out to be venomous—be hornets or so forth. Just in the same way, a bird, when it sees an unknown black beastie cock up its tail and assume a threatening attitude, is not likely to inquire too curiously

whether or not it is really a scorpion: the bare suspicion of a sting is quite enough to warn it off from interfering with any doubtful customer. Moreover, in the second place, even those birds or men who have never seen a scorpion at all are yet sure to be alarmed when an insect sticks up its forked tail menacingly, and shows fight, instead of skulking or flying away. As a general rule, if any animal



4.—THE DEVIL'S COACH-HORSE PRETENDS TO BE A SCORPION.

makes signs of resistance, we take it for granted he has adequate arms or weapons to resist with: and so this mere dumb-show of being a sort of scorpion proves quite sufficient to protect the Devil's Coach-horse from the majority of his enemies.

I ought to add that while our beetle thus frightens larger enemies, he is actively and offensively objectionable to small ones. The main use of his tail, indeed, is for folding away his wings, much as the earwig folds hers by aid of her pincers. But the Devil's Coach-horse makes it serve a double purpose. For he has a couple of yellow scent-glands in his tail, which secrete an unpleasant and acrid aromatic substance. These scent-glands are protruded in No. 4: you can just see them at the tip of the tail; and if the annoyance to which the beetle is subjected

seems to call for their intervention, a drop of the volatile body they distill is set free, and is at once discharged in the face of the enemy. Such a manoeuvre is in essence like that of the skunk : it is defence by means of a nasty odour, and it occurs not only in the Coach-horse's case, but also among a number of beetles and other insects.

The odd little creatures known as Bombardier Beetles are still quainter in their habits : they carry the last-mentioned mode of defence to an even greater pitch of perfection. For, like miniature artillery-men, they actually fire off a regular volley of explosive gas in the faces of their pursuers. The gas is secreted as a liquid ; but it is very volatile, and it vaporizes at once on contact with the air, so as to form a small, white cloud of pungent smoke, resembling in its effects nitric acid. Our native English species of Bombardier roams about in large flocks or regiments : and when one member of a clan is disturbed, all the other beetles of the company let off their artillery at once, so that the scattered volley has something the appearance of platoon firing. The chief enemy of the Bombardiers is a much larger and very handsome carnivorous beetle known as *Calosoma*. When this insect tiger hunts down a single Bombardier, and has almost caught him, the fugitive waits till his pursuer is quite close, and then salutes him with a discharge of fire-arms : the pungent gas gets into the *Calosoma's* eyes and mouth and distracts him for a moment ; and the Bombardier escapes in the midst of the confusion thus caused, under cover of the cloud he himself has exploded. That is the most highly evolved mode of defence of which I know among the British insects.

There are few creatures, again, which one would so little suspect of any attempt to bully and bluff others as the soft-bodied caterpillars. They are as a rule so plump and squashy and defenceless : a mere peck from a bird's beak is enough to kill them, for when once their tight, thin skin is broken, were it but with a pin-prick, all the flabby contents burst out at once in the messiest fashion. Yet even caterpillars, strange to say, have their tricks of terrifying. They pretend to be dangerous characters. I will set out with some of the simplest and least developed cases, and then pass on to a more complex and wily class of deceivers.

To begin with, I must premise that two sets of caterpillars have two different ways of erasing the unpleasant notice of birds and other insect-eaters. One way is that adopted

by the common "woolly-bear," a great hairy caterpillar, frequent in gardens, and covered from head to tail with long needles or bristles. These prickly points make the creature into a sort of insect hedgehog ; birds refuse to touch him, because the scented spikes, which to us are mere hairs, seem to them perfect spines or thorns, sticking into their tongues and throats, or clogging their gizzards. Protected caterpillars like the woolly-bears live quite openly, exposed on the leaves and branches of their food-plant ; they are not afraid of being seen : nay, they rather court observation than shun it, because they know nobody will attack them. The porcupine has no need to run away like the rabbit. Similar tactics are also adopted by many nasty-tasting caterpillars, in whose bodies natural selection has developed bitter or unpleasant juices. These caterpillars are rejected by birds and lizards—the great enemies of the race—and therefore they find it worth while to clothe themselves in gaudy and conspicuous red or yellow bands, so as to advertise all corners of their inedible qualities. Whenever you see such brilliantly-attired grubs (like those of the Maggie Moth, so common on gooseberry-bushes—a striking creature tricked out in belts of black and orange), you may be sure of two things : first, they live openly and undisguisedly on the leaves of their food-plant, without any attempt at mean concealment ; and second, they are nasty to the taste, and therefore rejected as food by insect-eating animals. Now and then a young and inexperienced bird may eat one, to be sure ; but it never tries twice, and the solitary martyr is sacrificed for the good of the race. Their bright colours and gaudy bands are just advertisements, as it were, of their inedible qualities. For, of course, nasty taste would do a caterpillar no good if the bird had always to sample it before rejecting it ; the broken skin alone would be enough to kill it. Hence almost all uneatable caterpillars have acquired bright colours by natural selection—that is to say, by the less bright being continuously devoured or killed ; and birds on their side have learned to know (after one trial, or, perhaps, even before it by inherited instinct) that red or yellow bands and belts in caterpillars are the outward and visible sign of uneatableness.

The second group or set of caterpillars is edible and tasty : it, therefore, governs itself accordingly, and has recourse to the exactly opposite tactics. Caterpillars of this class are smooth and naked : they never have the

brilliant "warning colours" of the nasty-tasted kinds: and they show a marked absence of the beautiful metallic sheen, the strange melting iridescent hues and spots which add beauty to the charms of so many among the uneatable species. Such fat and smooth-skinned edible caterpillars are, of course, very tempting juicy morsels to birds and other insect-eating animals. Their motions, like those of all grubs, are slow: and if they lived exposed on their food-plants, after the fashion of the protected hairy and bitter kinds, they would all be eaten up before they had time to turn into moths or butterflies. Here, therefore, natural selection has produced the contrary result from that which it produces among protected kinds. Caterpillars of this edible type which showed themselves too openly and imprudently have got picked off by birds, like sentries and pickets who make themselves too conspicuous to the enemy's sharpshooters. Only the most prudent, modest, and retiring grubs have survived to become moths or butterflies, and so be the parents of future generations, to whom they hand on their own peculiarities. In this way the edible caterpillars have acquired at last a fixed hereditary instinct of lurking under leaves, or in dark spots, and never showing themselves openly. The larvae of the butterfly group as a whole thus fall into two great classes (as far as regards habits alone, I mean): the *protected*, which are either hairy or nasty, and which flaunt themselves openly; and the *unprotected*, which lurk and skulk, endeavouring to escape notice as sedulously as their rivals the protected endeavour to attract it.

Nor is that all. It would clearly be useless for a bright red or yellow caterpillar to hide under a green leaf, and then suppose by that simple device he was going to escape observation. Birds are always looking out for insects under leaves. The consequence is

that skulking or lurking caterpillars are soon found out by sharp-eyed and hungry enemies, unless they closely resemble the foliage or stems upon which they lie. From generation to generation, accordingly, the less imitative insects get even, and the more imitative spared: so that nowadays, most unarmed caterpillars are green like the leaves or grey like the stems, and are even provided with markings of light and shade upon their skins which mimic the distribution of light and shade among the ribs and veins of the surrounding foliage. Such deceptive leaf-like caterpillars are always very difficult to find: so that careless observers as a rule know only those of the other type, the great hairy "woolly-bears" and the brilliant red and yellow-banded bitter kinds; they never observe the unobtrusive green and brown sorts, which harmonize so admirably with their native tree in colour and markings.

Many greenish caterpillars, however, when

discovered and disturbed, fall back on their second line of defence: they endeavour to frighten their enemies by devices closely similar to those of the Devil's Coach-horse. The caterpillar of the Broad-bordered Bee-hawk, for example, forms a good instance of a very simple stage in the development of such brazen-faced "terrifying" tactics. This warlike grub is shown in No. 5, trying on its simple little attempt to make itself alarming. Though by no means an uncanny-looking or appalling insect, it will rear itself up on its haunches (so to speak) when attacked, raising the fore part of its body erect with a sudden jerk, and holding its head high, as if it meant to bite or sting, so as to give itself as formidable an aspect as possible. The mild



5.—CATERPILLAR OF THE BROAD-BORDERED BEE-HAWK TRYING TO LOOK ALARMING.

birds will eye the harmless creature askance when it attempts this evolution, putting their heads on one side, and ruffling their crests in evident terror. The attitude is all a simple piece of bluff, to be sure, but it *pays*; indeed,

bluff in warfare is often more than half the battle. If you put on a bold face in a row, and seem able to take care of yourself, people are apt to think you have a knife up your sleeve, and therefore to refrain from unnecessarily annoying you.

The cunning caterpillar which finally develops into the Privet Hawk-moth has a slightly more evolved mode of purely theatrical frightening. You see him in No. 6, a full-fed specimen, just ready to turn at once into a chrysalis. This grub feeds usually on the vivid leaves of the privet; he is therefore protectively coloured a bright green, like that of the foliage about him. "But why those great purple stripes on his sides?" you will ask. "Surely they must make him an easy mark for birds?" Not at all: please notice that they run obliquely. There is method in that obliquity. When the caterpillar is smaller, he lurks unseen on the underside of the leaves, and this pattern of oblique purplish lines exactly imitates the general effect of the shadows cast by the ribs—so much so, that if you look for him on a privet-tree in spring, I doubt whether you will find him till I point him out to you. Even when he waxes fat and full fed, the purple stripes still aid him more or less by breaking up the large green surface

into smaller areas, as Professor Poulton has well noticed. He harmonizes better so with the broken masses of the leaves about him. Then again, when the time arrives for him to turn into a chrysalis, he descends to the ground, which, under a thickly-leaved privet bush, is most often brown. So, just as he is coming of age and reaching the proper moment for migration, his back all at once begins to turn brown, in order that he may be less observed as he walks about on the stem; while by the time he is quite ready to take to the earth he has grown brown all

over, thus matching the soil in which he has nest to bury himself. You could hardly have a better example of the sort of colour-change which often accompanies altered habits of living.

In the illustration, however, you see this really harmless and undefended grub in the act of trying to pretend he is poisonous. He is now mature, and the stripes on his sides stand out conspicuously as he walks on the stem. A sparrow threatens him. He retorts by showing fight—fallaciously and deceptively, for he has nothing to fight with. He lifts his head with an aggressive air, and throws himself about from side to side, as if he knew he could bite, and meant to do it. He also lashes his tail in pretended anger—"I would have you to know, Sir Bird, I am not to be trifled with!" The empty demonstration usually succeeds: the sparrow gets alarmed and believes he means it. This policy is, in essence, that commonly known as "spited": it consists in trying to frighten your enemy instead of fighting him.

The oddly-marked caterpillar of the Puss Moth carries the same plan of campaign to a much more artistic pitch. This very quaint insect is common on willows and poplars in England, and is on the whole protectively coloured. Black at first, it looks like a mere speck or spot on the leaf; as it grows, it becomes gradually greener, relieved with broad purple patches on the back, which produce the effect of lines and shadows. When quite full-grown, as seen in No. 7, the adult caterpillar generally rests at ease on the twigs of the willow-tree. Our illustration shows it in this final stage of its larval life, just taking alarm and humping its back at the approach of some bird or other enemy. If the alarm continues, it goes through a most curious series of evolutions, admirably shown by Mr. Enock in No. 8. Here, the little



6.—FULL-GROWN CATERPILLAR OF THE PRIVET HAWK-MOTH, ARTIFICIALLY COLOURED.



7.—CATERPILLAR OF THE PUSS MOTH PREPARING FOR ACTING.

beast is altogether on the defensive: it withdraws its head into the first ring of the body, and inflates the margin, which is bright red in colour. Two black spots, which are not really eyes, but which look absurdly eye-like, now give it a grotesque and terrifying appearance. In fact, the inflated ring resembles a hideous grinning mask, and gives the impression of a face with eyes, nose, and mouth, like that of some uncanny creeping creature. But the apparent face is not a face at all: it is artfully made up of lines and spots on the skin of the body. At the same time that the caterpillar thus assumes its mask, it stands on its eight hind legs as erect as it can, and whips out two pink bristles or tentacles from the forked prongs at the end of its tail—you can see them in the picture. It then bends forward the tail, and brandishes or waves about these pink bristles over its false head, so as to present altogether a most gruesome aspect. Indeed, even Mr. Enock's vigorous sketch of the

little brute in its tragic moments does not quite convey the full effect of its acting in the absence of colour: for the bright red margin and the swishing pink switches add not a little to the telling smirk and black goggle-eyes of the mask-like face thus produced *in terrorem*.

That is not all, either. The Puss Moth caterpillar has a rapid trick of facing about abruptly in the direction of the enemy as if it meant to bite: and this trick is always most disconcerting. If ever so lightly touched, it instantly assumes the terrifying attitude, and presents its pretended face to the astonished aggressor. From a harmless caterpillar it becomes all at once a raging bulldog. Touch it on the other side, and it faces round like lightning in the opposite direction. Professor Poulton tried the effect of its grimace on a marmoset, and found the marmoset was afraid to touch the mysterious creature. We are not marmosets, but I notice that most human beings recoil instinctively from a Puss Moth caterpillar when it assumes its mask. Even if you *know* it's harmless, there is something very alarming in its rapid twists and turns, and in the persistent way in which it grins and spits at you.

Really spits, too; for the insect has a gland in its head which ejects, at need, an irritating fluid. If this fluid gets into your eyes, they smart most unpleasantly. It contains formic acid, and is strong enough to be exceedingly stinging and painful. The discharge repels



8.—THE SAME CATERPILLAR PRESENTING AN ARMY.

lizards, and probably also birds, who are among the chief enemies of this as of other caterpillars.

The deadliest foe of the Puss Moth larva, however, is the ichneumon-fly, a parasitic

creature, which lays its eggs in living caterpillars, and lets its grubs hatch out inside them, so as to devour the host from within in the most ruthless fashion. There are many kinds of ichneumon-fly, some of them very minute: the one which attacks the Puss Moth in its larval stage is a comparatively big one. The fly lays its eggs behind the caterpillar's head, where the victim is powerless to dislodge them. In all probability the defensive attitude and the shower of formic acid are chiefly of use against these parasitic foes: for when an ichneumon-fly appears, the caterpillar assumes his "terrifying" attitude the moment it touches him, and faces full round to the foe with his false mask inflated. A very small quantity of the formic acid Professor Poulton found sufficient to kill an ichneumon: and there can be little doubt that this is its main object.

The last of these "bluffing" caterpillars with which I shall deal here is that of the Lobster Moth. In No. 9 you see a couple of these quaint and unwieldy creatures "demonstrating" before an enemy, as if he were the Sultan. The Lobster Moth in its larval stage frequents beech-trees, and you will see in the illustration that the two represented are on a twig of beech. When at rest, the caterpillar resembles a curled and withered beech-leaf, and by this unconscious mimicry escapes detection. But when discovered and roused to battle, oh, then he imitates the action of the rider. He holds up his short front legs in a menacing attitude, so as to suggest a pair of frightful gaping jaws: the four long legs behind these he keeps wide apart and makes them quiver with rage in the most alarming pantomimic indignation. His tail he turns topsyturvy over his head like a scorpion; while the forked appendages at its end seem

like frightful stings, with which he is just about to inflict condign punishment on whoever has dared to disturb his quiet. But it is all mere bluff, though the whole effect is extremely terrifying. The performance does not, indeed, mimic any particular venomous beast, but it suggests most appalling and paralyzing possibilities. Many of these queer attitudes, indeed, owe their impressiveness just to their grotesque simulation of one knows not quite what: they are not definite and special, they are worse than that; they appeal to the imagination. And if only you reflect how afraid we often feel of the most harmless insects, merely because they

look frightful, you will readily understand that such vague appeals to the imagination may be far more effectual than any real sting could ever be. We dread the unknown even more than the painful.

The funniest of all these false pretences, however, is one which Hermann Müller, I believe, was the first to point out in this same Lobster Moth caterpillar. When very much bothered by ichneumon-flies (to whose attacks it is particularly exposed), this bristling beast displays, for the first time, two black patches



D.—CATERPILLARS OF THE LOBSTER MOTH DEMONSTRATING IN FORCE BEFORE THE HOSTILE BAITATIONS.

on its side, till then concealed by a triangular flap. Now, these patches closely resemble the sort of wound made by the ichneumon when it deposits its eggs, so it is probable that they serve to take in the assailant, who is thus led to think that another fly of her own kind has been before her, and, therefore, that it is no use laying her eggs where a previous parasite is already in possession. There would not be enough Lobster Moth to feed *five* hungry ichneumon families. In fact, the caterpillar first begins by bluffing, and says, "If you touch me, I bite!" then, finding the bluff unsuccessful, it further pretends to throw up

the sponge, and cries out with a bounce: "Oh, if egg-laying is your game, *that's* no good: I'm already occupied!" For a combination of wiles, this crafty double game probably "licks creation."

If the defenders are so cunning, however, the attackers can sometimes turn the tables upon them. Animals that hunt often disguise themselves, in order to avoid the notice of the prey, and so steal unobserved upon their victims. Such tactics are like those of the Kaffirs, who cut bits of bush, and then creep up slowly, slowly behind them, under cover of the branches, upon the gnus or antelopes which they wish to slaughter. In No. 10 we have one example of this method of hunting or stalking, as pursued by the intelligent English grass-spider. All spiders, of course, have eight legs, four on each side; but in most of the class, the various pairs of legs are evenly distributed, so as to lie about the body in a rough circle or something like it. The grass-spider, however, has his own views on this important matter. His form and attitude are quite peculiar. He lies in wait for his prey on the open, crouched against a stem of grass, with his two front pairs of legs extended before him, and his back pair behind, in an arrangement which is rather linear than circular. This position makes him almost invisible — much more invisible in real life, indeed, than you see him in the drawing: for if he were represented as inconspicuous as he looks you would say there was no spider there at all, only a naked grass-stem. The delusion is heightened by his lines and colours: he is mostly green or greenish, with narrow black or brown stripes which run more or less up and down his body, instead of cross-wise as usual, so that they harmonize beautifully with the up-and-down lines of the blades and stem in the tuft which he inhabits. When he is pressed close against a

bent of grass, on the look-out for flies, it is almost impossible for the quickest eye to distinguish him. Flies come near, never suspecting the presence of their hereditary foe; as soon as they are close to him, the grass-spider rushes out with a dash and secures them. His jaws are among the most terrible in all his terrible race: they are large and wide-spreading, with two rows of teeth on either side, and a pair of long fangs of truly formidable proportions.

In other ways, also, this particular spider is a clever fellow, for he lives near water; but when the rains are heavy and there is likely to be a flood, he shifts his quarters higher up the ground, and so escapes impending inundation.

Deceptions and false pretences of this sort are somewhat less common among plants than among animals: but still, they occur, and that not infrequently. "What? Plants deceive?" you cry. "The innocent little flowers? How can they do it? Surely that is impossible!" By no means. I have watched plant life pretty closely for a good many years now, and every year the conviction is forced upon me more and more profoundly that whatever animals do, plants do almost equally. There is no vile trick or ruse or stratagem that they cannot imitate: no base deception that they will not practise. They lie and steal with the worst; they hold out false baits for deluded insects, and hide real fly-traps with honeyed words and sweet secretions.

As a good illustration among English plants, look at the Grass of Parnassus, that beautiful, dishonest bog-herb, with glossy-green leaves and pure white blossoms, which is considered the especial guerdon of poets. I found a whole nest of it once in a swamp near Cromer, and carried off a bunch of the lovely flowers as an appropriate offering to Mr. Swinburne who



10.—GRASS SPIDER, IN Awaiting FOR FLIES.

was stopping at Sidestränd. Yet this poet's flower, dainty and delicate as it is—you see in No. 11 its counterfeit presentment—is not ashamed to deceive the poor bees and flies in a way which the Heathen Chinese would have considered unsportsmanlike. It is a sham, a commercial sham of the worst type. It lives for the most part on wet moors among mountains, or else in the boggy hollows between blown sand-hills by the sea: and when its milk-white flowers star the ground in such spots, it forms one of the loveliest ornaments of our English flora. But trust it not, oh butterfly: it is fooling thee! From a distance, it looks as if it were full of honey; it advertises well: but at close quarters 'tis a wooden nutmeg; it turns out to be nothing better than an arrant humbug.

The deception is managed in this disgraceful fashion. Inside each petal lies a curious ten or twelve-fingered organ, which is in reality an abortive stamen. No. 12 shows you one such petal removed, with the false honey-glands drawn on a larger scale than in the other illustration. The ten-fingered stamen bears at its tip a number of translucent yellow drops, which look like pure nectar. But they are nothing of



11.—GRASS OF PARNASSUS, DISPLAYING AND ADVERTISING ITS IMITATION HONEY.

false pretences: it deserves fourteen days' without the option of a fine. As a rule, in similar cases, the flies are rewarded for their kind offices as carriers by the merited wage of a drop of honey. But the Grass of Parnassus, mendacious herb, pretends to be purveying a specially fine quantity

and quality of nectar, while in reality it offers only a hard, glassy knob with nothing in it. This pays the plant, of course, because the blossoms do not have to go on producing honey fresh and fresh; a mere inexpensive show does just as well as the real article: "Our customers like it!" but the language of the flies when they discover the fraud is something just awful.

Nor is this by any means



12.—A SINGLE PETAL, TO SHOW THE CHARACTER OF THE SHAM HONEY.

a solitary example of plant depravity. The whole group of pitcher-plants, for instance, cruelly manure themselves by means of living insects in the most treacherous fashion. These lovely and wicked plants live, without exception, in wet and boggy soil, where they cannot get enough animal matter for manure in the ordinary way by the roots: so they lay themselves out instead to capture and absorb the tissues of insects. For this horrid purpose, they twist their leaves into deep pitchers which catch and hold the rain water, and so form reservoirs to drown their prey. Then they entice insects by bright colours to their traps, and allure them to enter by secreting honey at the top of the pitcher. Hairs point downward inside; these allow the flies to walk on to their fate, bribed as they go by lines of nectar: but if they try to return, ah, then they find their mistake: the hairs prevent them, after the fashion of a lobster-pot. Thus they walk on and on till they reach the water, when they are swamped and clotted in a decaying mass, from which the treacherous plant draws manure at last for its own purposes. The pitchers are thus at once traps to catch animals, and stomachs to digest them.

Another and still odder case of deceptiveness in plants is shown by a curious group of South African flowers, the *Hydnoras* and *Stapelias*. These queer and malodorous herbs have very large and rather handsome but fleshy blossoms, an inch or two across, dappled and spotted just like decaying meat. They live in the dry and almost desert region, where carrion-flies abound. Such flies lay their eggs and hatch out their grubs for the most part in half-eaten carcasses of antelopes or smaller animals killed and in part devoured by lions and other beasts of prey. So the flowers have taken to imitating dead meat. They are a lurid red in colour, with livid livery patches, and they have a strong and unpleasant smell of decaying animal matter. The flies, deceived by the scent, flock to them to lay their eggs, and in so doing carry out the real object of the plant by fertilising the blossoms. But, of course, the whole thing is a vile sham: for when the maggots hatch out, the flower has died, and there is no food for them, so they perish

of starvation. Dr. Blackmore, of Salisbury, once gave me some of these curious plants and flowers: I noticed that in the sunlight, where they smelt just like decomposing meat, they attracted dozens of bluebottle flies and other carrion insects.

Protective resemblance also occurs among plants: for in the same dry South African region, where every green thing gets nibbled down in the rainless season, certain ice-plants and milk-weeds have acquired the trick of forming tubers or stems exactly like the pebbles among which they grow: so that when the leaves die down in the dry weather, the tuber is not distinguishable from the stones all round it. Such tubers are really reservoirs of living material destined to carry the life of the plant over the dead season: as soon as rain comes again, they put forth fresh green leaves at once, and grow on after their sleep as if nothing had happened. Even terrifying attitudes are not unknown in the vegetable world: for one of the uses of the movements in the Sensitive Plant is almost certainly to frighten animals. Browsing creatures that come near the bushes in their native woods see the leaves shrink back and curl up when touched, and are afraid to eat a tree that has so evidently a spirit in it. The Squirting Cucumber of the Mediterranean, again, alarms goats and cattle by discharging its ripe fruits explosively in their faces the moment the stem is touched. In this case the primary object is no doubt the dispersal of the seeds, which squirt out elastically as the fruit jumps off; but to frighten browsing enemies is a secondary advantage. There can be no question as to the reality of the plant's hostile intention, because the fruits also contain a pungent juice, which discharges itself at the same instant into the eyes of the assailant. As I have received a volley of this irritating liquid more than once in my own face (in the pursuit of science) I can testify personally on the best of evidence that it is distinctly painful. The tactics of the Squirting Cucumber in first frightening you, and then injecting acrid juice into your eyes, are thus exactly similar to the plan of action pursued by the angry larva of the Pass Moth.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLVIII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)



A DEFEATER TEND. HENRY VIII.

THE SEARCH FOR GUY FAWKES.

THE proceedings at the opening of the forthcoming Session, the fifth in the fourteenth Parliament of Queen Victoria, will be fully reported in the morning papers. There is a proceeding preliminary to the Speaker's taking the Chair which, from its history and character, is of necessity conducted in secret.

It is the search through the underground chambers and passages of the House with design to frustrate any schemes in the direction of a dissolution of Parliament that descendants or disciples of Guy Fawkes may have in hand. The present generation has seen, more especially when a Conservative Government have been in power, some revolutionary changes in Parliamentary procedure. The solemn search underneath the Houses of Parliament, preceding the opening of the revolving Sessions ever since Gunpowder Plot, is still observed with all the pomp and circumstance attached to it three hundred years ago.

The investigation is conducted under the personal direction of the Lord Great Chamberlain, who is answerable with his head for any miscarriage. When a peer comes newly to the office he makes a point of personally accompanying the expedition. But, though picturesque, and essential to the working of the British Constitution, it falls in

time, and the Lord Great Chamberlain, relying upon the discretion, presence of mind, and resource of his Secretary, usually leaves it to him. Oddly enough, the House of Commons is not officially represented at the performance, the avowed object of which is not, primarily, to secure the safety of the Lords and Commons, but to avert the conclusion aimed at by Guy Fawkes—namely, to blow up the Sovereign. It is as the personal representative of the Queen that the Lord Great Chamberlain takes the business in hand.

To this day the result of the inquiry is directly communicated to Her Majesty. Up to a period dating back less than fifty years, as soon as the search was over, the Lord Great Chamberlain dispatched a messenger on horseback to the Sovereign, informing him (or her) that all was well, and that Majesty might safely repair to Westminster to open the new Session. To-day the telegraph wires carry the assurance to the Queen wherever she may chance to be in residence on the day before the opening of Parliament.

THE SEARCH PARTY.

Whilst the Commons take no official part in the performance, the peers are represented either by Black Rod or by his deputy, the Yeoman Usher, who is accompanied by half-a-dozen stalwart doorkeepers and messengers, handy in case of a fray. The Board of Works are represented by the Chief Surveyor of the London District, accompanied by the Clerk of Works to the Houses of Parliament. The Chief Engineer of the House of Commons, who is responsible for all the underground workings of the building, leads the party, the Chief Inspector of Police boldly marching on his left hand.

These are details prosaic enough. The nineteenth century has engrafted them on the sixteenth. The picturesqueness of the

scene comes in with the appearance of the armed contingent. This is made up of some fourteen or sixteen of the Yeomen of the Guard, who arrive at the place of rendezvous armed with halberds and swords. The halberds look well, but this search is, above all, a business undertaking. It is recognised that for close combat in the vaults and narrow passages of the building halberds would be a little unwieldy. They are accordingly stacked in the Prince's Chamber, the Yeomen fearlessly marching on armed with nothing but their swords. Clad in their fifteenth century costume, they are commanded by an officer who wears a scarlet swallow-tailed coat, cocked hat, and feathers, gilt spurs shining at his martial heel. The spurs are not likely to be needed. But the British officer knows how to prepare for any emergency.

Following the Yeomen of the Guard stride half-a-dozen martial men in costumes dating from the early part of the present century. They wear swallow-tail coats, truncated cone caps, with the base of the cone uppermost. They are armed with short, serviceable cutlasses and batons, such as undertakers' men carry, suggesting that they have come to bury Guy Fawkes, not to catch him.

Most of the underground chambers and passages of the Houses of Parliament are lit by electricity. Failing that, they are flooded with gas. When search for Guy Fawkes was first ordered, the uses of gas had not been discovered, much less the possibilities of electricity. Lanterns were the only thing, so lanterns are still used. As the dauntless company of men-at-arms tramp

along the subterranean passages, it is pretty to see the tallow dips in the swinging lanterns shamed by the wanton light that beats from the electric lamps.



INSPECTOR BORSLEY.

Her Majesty's Ministers meeting Parliament at the opening of their fifth Session remain happy in the reflection that their position is not endangered by any mines dug within the limits of their own escarpment. It is different in the opposite camp. The first thing good Liberals do as soon as their own party comes into power is to commence a series of manoeuvres designed to thrust it forth. Sometimes they are called "caves," occasionally "tea-room cabals." But, as Mr.

Gladstone learned in the 1868-74 Parliament, in that of 1880-85, and, with tragic force, in the Parliament which made an end of what Mr. Chamberlain called "The Stop-Gap Government," they all mean the same thing. Lord Rosebery when he came to the Premiership found the habit was not eradicated.

The condition of men and things in the

House of Commons when Parliament met after the General Election in July, 1895, was rarely favourable to the formation of "caves" on the Ministerial side. To begin with, the Government had such an overwhelming majority that the game of playing at being independent was so safe that its enjoyment was not forbidden to the most loyal Unionist. Given that condition, there were existent personal



A. CARRINGTON.

circumstances that supplied abundant material for cave-making. The necessity imposed on Lord Salisbury of finding

place in his Ministry for gentlemen outside the Conservative camp made it impossible not only to satisfy reasonable aspirations on the part of new men of his



SHELVED WITH A PEERAGE. (BARON DE WORMS.)

own party, but even to reinstate some ex-Ministers. Some, like Baron de Worms, were shelved with a peerage. Others, overlooked, were left to find places on back

cold. Whilst most of the leading members of the Liberal Unionist wing, including Mr. Jesse Collings and Mr. Powell Williams, were provided with office, Mr. Courtney's claims were ignored, and Sir John Lubbock's were probably never considered.

Amongst Conservative members who had not been in office but were not alone in their belief that they were well fitted for it were Mr. Gibson Bowles and Mr. George Wyndham—the latter since deservedly provided for. Moreover, to a corner seat below the gangway returned Mr. James Lowther, thought good enough in Disraeli's time to be Under-Secretary for the Colonies and Chief Secretary for Ireland. Since the death of Lord Beaconsfield kings had arisen in Egypt who knew not "Jemmy," or, at least, forgot his existence at a time when Ministerial offices were dispensed. The member for East Thanet, first returned for York in the summer of 1865, is not only personally popular in the House, but has high standing as an old Parliamentary hand. If he had liked to turn rusty, he might have done the Conservative Party at least as much harm as Mr. Horsman when in the same mood wrought to the party with which, to the last, he ranked himself.



"WHO KNEW NOT JEMMY."

benches above or below the gangway. Of men who held office in Lord Salisbury's former Administration, Mr. Jackson, Sir James Fergusson, Sir W. Hart-Dyke, and Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett were left out in the

From time to time Mr. Lowther has vindicated his independence of Ministerial discipline by dividing the House on the question of the futility of reading, at the commencement of recurring Sessions, the standing order

forbidding peers to interfere with elections. He has not gone beyond that, and whenever attempt has been made from the Opposition side to inflict damage on the best of all Governments, he has ranged himself on the side of Ministers.

Sir W. Hart-Dyke, Sir James Fergusson, and the late Sir W. LOOKED. Forwood, instead of openly resenting neglect, on more than one occasion went out of their way to defend the colleagues of the Prime Minister who slighted them. Mr. Wyndham was last Session not less generously loyal. Mr. Tommy Bowles, it is true, has been on occasion fractious. As for Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, when he recovered from the shock of realization that Lord Salisbury had not only formed a Ministry without including him in its membership, but looked as if he would be able to carry it on, he showed signs of resentment. Through successive Sessions he has sedulously endeavoured to embarrass an unappreciative Premier by cunningly devised questions addressed to the Colonial Secretary or to the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Curzon alike proved able to hold their own, and the Sheffield Knight coming out to kick has found himself fulfilling the humble function of the football.

A more serious defection was threatened last Session as the YERBURGH result of the distrust and discontent in Ministerial circles of Lord Salisbury's foreign policy. Mr. Yerburch, moved by apprehension that the interests of the British Empire in the Far East were at stake, instituted a series of weekly dinners at the Junior Carlton, where matters were talked over. The dinners were excellent, the wines choice, and Mr. Yerburch has a delicate taste in cigars. This meeting at dinner instead of at tea, as was the fashion in the Liberal camp at the time of Mr. Gladstone's trouble over the Irish University Bill in 1873, seemed to indicate manlier purpose. But nothing came of

it, except a distinct advancement of Mr. Yerburch's position in the House of Commons. He, as spokesman of the malcontents, found opportunity to display a complete mastery of an intricate geographical and political position, combined with capacity for forcibly and clearly stating his case.

Thus Lord Salisbury remained master of himself though China fell. Had Mr. Gladstone been in his position, under precisely similar circumstances, it would have been Her Majesty's Ministry that would have fallen to pieces.

As usual the recess has seen the final going over to the majority of old members of the House of Commons. Two who have died since the prorogation were distinct types of utterly divergent classes. There was nothing in common between the Earl of Winchilsea and Mr. T. B. Potter, except that they both sat in the 1880 Parliament, saw the rise of the Fourth Party, and the crumbling away of Mr. Gladstone's magnificent majority. Mr. Potter was by far the older member, having taken his seat for Rochdale on the death of Mr. Cobden in 1865. Except physically, he did not fill a large place in the House, but was much esteemed on both sides for his honest purpose and his genial good temper.

This last was imperturbable. It was not to be disturbed even by a double misfortune that accompanied one of the Cobden Club's annual dining expeditions to Greenwich. On the voyage out, passing Temple Pier, one of the guests fell overboard. At the start on the return journey, another guest, a distinguished Frenchman, stepping aboard as he thought, fell into the gurgling river, and was fished out with a boat-hook. Yet Mr. Potter, President of the Club, largely responsible for the success of the outing, did not on either occasion interrupt his beaming smile.

He was always ready to be of A BUFFER service in whatsoever unobtrusive STATE. manner. The House cherishes tender memories of a scene in 1890. The fight in Committee Room



THE HUMBLE FUNCTION OF THE FOOTBALL.

No. 15 had recently closed. Its memories still seared the breasts of the Irish members. Members were never certain that at any moment active hostilities might not commence even under the eye of the

Thames barge slipping down the river with the tide. He made his way to the bench where the severed Irish Leaders sat, and planted himself out between them, they perforce moving to right and left to



THE SUFFER STATE.

Speaker. One night a motion by Mr. John Morley raising the Irish question brought a large muster of the contending forces. Mr. Parnell, who had temporarily withdrawn from the scene, put in an appearance with the rest. He happened to seat himself on the same bench as Mr. Justin McCarthy, whom the majority of the Irish members had elected to succeed him in the leadership. Only a narrow space divided the twin. The most apprehensive did not anticipate militant action on the part of Mr. McCarthy. But, looking at Mr. Parnell's pale, stern face, knowing from report of proceedings in Committee Room No. 15 what passion smouldered beneath that mild exterior, timid members thought of what might happen, supposing the two rose together diversely claiming the ear of the House as Leader of the Irish Party.

At this moment Mr. T. B. Potter entered and moved slowly up the House like a

make room. Seeing him there, his white waistcoat shimmering in the evening light like the mainsail of an East Indiaman, the House felt that all was well. Mr. Parnell was a long-armed man; but, under whatsoever stress of passion, he could not get at Mr. McCarthy across the broad space of the member for Rochdale.

Lord Winchilsea sat in this promising same Parliament as Mr. Finch-Hatton. He early made his mark by a maiden speech delivered on one of the interminable debates on Egypt. He was content to leave it there, never, as far as I remember, again taking part in set debate. His appearance was striking. Many years after, when he had succeeded to the earldom, I happened to be present when he rose from the



THE LATE LORD WINCHILSEA.

luncheon-table at Haverholme Priory to acknowledge the toast of his health. By accident or design he stood under a contemporary portrait of his great ancestor,

Christopher Hatton, Queen Elizabeth's Lord Chancellor. The likeness between the founder of the family and a scion separated by the space of more than three hundred years was almost startling.

Lord Winchelsea aged rapidly. When he made his maiden speech in the House of Commons he had not advanced beyond the stage of the young dandy. His face was a shade of ivory, the pallor made more striking by the coal-black hair. His attitude, like his dress and everything about him, was carefully studied. His left hand, rigidly extended, lightly rested behind his back. His right hand, when not in action, hid his finger-tips in the breast of a closely-buttoned frock-coat. Occasionally, he withdrew his hand and made stiff gestures in the air as if he were writing hieroglyphs. Occasionally, he emphasized a point by slightly bowing to the amused audience.

The matter of his speech was excellent, its form, occasionally, as extravagant as his get-up. The House roared with laughter when Mr. Finch-Hatton, pointing stiff finger-tips at Mr. Gladstone smiling on the Treasury Bench, invited members to visit the Premier on his uneasy couch and watch him moaning and tossing as the long procession of his pallid victims passed before him. This reminiscence of a scene from "Richard III." was a great success, though not quite in the manner Mr. Hatton, working it out in his study, had forecast.

A man of great natural capacity, wide culture, and, as was shown in his later connection with agriculture, of indomitable industry, he would, having lived down his extravagancies, have made a career in the Commons. Called thence by early doom he went to the Lords, and was promptly and finally extinguished.

MUSTERED
AT J. J.
COLMAN'S.

Another old member of the House who died in the recess is Mr. Colman. The great mustard manufacturer, whose name was carried on tin boxes to the uttermost ends of the earth, never made his mark in the House of Commons. I doubt whether he ever got so far as to work off his maiden speech. A quiet, kindly, shrewd man of business, he was content to look on whilst others fought and talked. He came too late to the House to be ever thoroughly at one with it, and took an early opportunity of retiring.

Mr. Gladstone had a high respect for him, and occasionally visited his beautiful home in Norfolk. One of these occasions became

historic by reason of Mr. Gladstone unwittingly making a little joke. Coming down to breakfast one morning, and finding the house-party already gathered in the room, Mr. Gladstone cheerily remarked, "What are we all mustered?"

He never knew why this innocent observation had such remarkable success with Mr. J. J. Colman's guests.

MR. GLADSTONE'S
TABLE-TALK.

A few more recollections of Mr. Gladstone whilst still in harness. I remember meeting him at a well-known house during the Midlothian campaign of 1885. He came in to luncheon half an hour late, and was rallied by the host upon his unpunctuality. "You know," he said, "only the other day you lectured us upon the grace of punctuality at luncheon-time."

Mr. Gladstone took up this charge with energy familiar at the time in the House of Commons when repelling one of Lord Randolph Churchill's random attacks. Finally, he drew from the host humble confession that he had been in error, that so far from recommending punctuality at luncheon-time he had urged the desirability of absence of formality at the meal. "Anyone," he said, "should drop in at luncheon when they please and sit where they please."

Through the meal he was in the liveliest humour, talking in his rich, musical voice. After luncheon we adjourned to the library, a room full of old furniture and precious memorials, chiefly belonging to the Stuart times. On the shelves were a multitude of rare books. Mr. Gladstone picked up one, and sitting on a broad window seat, began reading and discoursing about it. Setting out for a walk, he was got up in a most extraordinary style. He wore a narrow-skirted square-cut tail-coat, made, I should say, in the same year as the Reform Bill. Over his shoulders hung an inadequate cape, of rough hairy cloth, once in vogue but now little seen. On his head was a white soft felt hat. The back view as he trudged off at four-mile-an-hour pace was irresistible.

Mrs. Gladstone watched over him like a hen with its first chicken. She was always pulling up his collar, fastening a button, or putting him to sit in some particular chair out of a draught. These little attentions Mr. Gladstone accepted without remark, with much the placid air a small and good-tempered babe wears when it is being tucked in its cot.

AN OLD
LONDON
HOUSE.

In the Session of 1890, Mr. Gladstone rented a house in St. James's Square, a big, roomy, gloomy mansion, built when George I. was King. On the pillars of the porch stand in admirable preservation two of the wrought iron extinguishers, in which in those days the link-boys used to thrust their torches when they had brought master or mistress home, or conveyed a dinner guest. Inside hideous light-absorbing flock wall-papers prevailed. One gained an idea, opportunity rare in these days, of the markiness amid which our grandfathers dwelt.

Dining there one night, I found the host made up for all household shortcomings. He talked with unbroken flow of spirits, always having more to say on any subject that turned up, and saying it better, than any expert present. His memory was as amazing as his opportunities of acquiring knowledge had been unique.

As we sat at table he, in his eighty-first year, recalled, as if it had happened the day before, an incident that befell when he was eighteen months old. Prowling about the nursery on all-fours, there suddenly flashed upon him consciousness of the existence of his nurse, as she towered above him. He remembered her voice and the very pattern of the frock she wore. This was his earliest recollection, his first clear consciousness of existence. His memory of Canning when he stood for Liverpool in 1812 was perfectly clear; indeed, he was then nearly three years old, and took an intelligent interest in public affairs.

Of later date was his recollection of Parlia-

mentary Elections, and the strange processes by which in the good old days they were accomplished. The poll at Liverpool was kept open sometimes for weeks, and the custom was for voters to be shut up in pens ten at a time. At the proper moment they were led out of these inclosures and conducted to the

polling-booths, where they recorded their votes. These musters were called "tallies," and the reckoning up of them was a matter watched with breathless interest in the constituency.

It was a DOCTORING point of A TALLY. keen competition which side should first land a "tally" at the polling-booth. Mr. Gladstone told with great gusto of an accident that befell one in the first quarter of the century. The poll opened at eight o'clock in the morning. The Liberals, determined to make a favourable start, marshalled ten voters, and as early as four in the morning filled the pen by the polling-

booth. To all appearances the Conservatives were beaten in this first move. But their defeat was only apparent. Shortly after seven o'clock a barrel of beer, conveniently tapped, with mugs handy, was rolled up within hand-reach of the pen, where time hung heavy on the hands of the expectant voters. They naturally regarded this as a delicate attention on the part of their friends, and did full justice to their hospitable forethought. After a while, consternation fell upon them. Man after man hastily withdrew till the pen was empty, and ten Conservatives, waiting in reserve, rushed in and took possession of the place.

"The beer," said Mr. Gladstone, laughing till the tears came into his eyes, "had been heavily jalaped."



AT A FOUR-MILE-AN-HOUR PACE.

DRAWING A BADGER

By
EDMUND MITCHELL



IT was a sleepy little town, far from the busy world, almost hidden away in the back-woods. During the long summer days, small boys—and sometimes grown-up folks as well—hardly knew what to do to pass the time. It was an event of some importance, therefore, when one afternoon Grizzly Jim, the trapper, brought to the only hostelry the settlement could boast a live badger. He carried it in a big bag, and shook it out over the half-door into the empty stable, that the hotel-keeper and his friends might have a look at the shy and rarely-seen animal. At that hour there were not many people about, so when the other half of the stable door was drawn to, and the captive left alone, the news of its arrival was as yet known only to a few.

Among these few, however, was the hotel-keeper's son Dick, a youngster about twelve years old, who had inspected the badger with keenest interest and a critical eye. He had also listened to every word of the conversation between Grizzly Jim and his father,

and had gathered that they were going to pack up the beast in a box and send it off next day by the railroad to a city, some hundreds of miles distant, where all manner of strange creatures were kept in cages in a Zoo. So the badger would be lodged in the hotel for one night only, and Dick reflected that if any fun was to be got out of "the comical cuss," as he called it, there was no time to be lost.

After a quarter of an hour's solid thinking, Dick went out into the stable yard and dragged forth an old dog-kennel, which for a

long time had lain disused in the woodshed. He rubbed it up a bit, plentifully littered it with fresh straw, and then set it down right in the middle of the yard. To the big chain he attached an old rusted iron kettle, which he pushed back into the kennel among the straw as far as his arms could reach. These

preparations completed, Dick thrust his hands into his trouser pockets, and set off down the main street, whistling a tune.



"HE SHOOK IT OUT OVER THE HALF-DOOR."

At a little distance he met his most intimate chum, Billy Green, the wheelwright's son.

"Say, Billy," said Dick, "heard the noos?"

"What noos?"

"Grizzly Jim's bin an' trapped a badger."

"Wal, that don't count for much. Ain't anythink very 'xtroed'n'ry in his trappin' a badger, is there? Comes reg'lar in his day's work, I reckon. Now, if it'd bin an elephant or a gi-raffe"—the speaker paused to give full effect to his grin of sarcasm.

"Oh! bother yer elephants and yer gi-raffes," interrupted Dick, with impatience; "I tell ye it's a real live badger."

"A live one?" asked Billy, his interest slightly stimulated.

"Yes, a live one. I see'd it shaken out of a bag. And it's up now this very minute at father's."

"Jee-whizz!" cried Billy, all on the hop now with excitement. "Then I s'pose they're goin' to have a badger fight?"

"A badger fight! Who're ye gettin' at?" retorted Dick, ironically.

"Why, ther'll be a badger fight with dogs, of course. Don't ye know, Dick, that a badger, when his dander's fairly riz, can fight like a whole sackful of wild cats? It's rare sport, badger-baitin', I can tell ye, an' jest the real thing to try the stuff young dogs is made of."

"Better'n rats?" asked Dick, in turn growing excited at the vista of unexpected possibilities opening out before him.

"Rats ain't in it with badgers," replied Billy, disdainfully.

"Then I s'pect Grizzly Jim's gone down town to hunt up some dogs," suggested Dick.

"Certain sure."

"Wal, hadn't you best come to our place right now, an' have a good look at the critter 'fore the crowd begins to roll up?"

"I guess there's some sense in that. Let's skoot along, Dick."

So the two boys set off at a quick pace towards the hotel. And as they walked Dick described the badger's points.

"He's got short stumpy legs, Billy, but terrible claws. Rip a dog open like winkin'."

"And pooty sharp teeth too, I reckon?"

"I should jest say. Wouldn't like 'm try 'em in my leg."

"See you've got 'm in the old dog-kennel," remarked Billy, as they came in sight of the stable yard.

"It's a strong chain that, you know," replied Dick, evasively. "Bruno, the old boardhound that died, couldn't break it."

"Guess the chain'll hold the badger all right. But I can't see nothink of 'm in that there dog-hutch. I'll want ter have 'm out, Dick, in the open."

"You'd best take care, Billy," cried Dick, as his companion laid hold of the chain. "Remember his claws."

"Oh! I'm not 'feard, you bet," replied Billy, loftily. "It needs somethin' more'n a badger to skeer me. Besides, he can't scratch or bite much through my leggin's."

"Mind, Billy," continued Dick, with an intensely anxious look on his face. "I've warned ye. Don't ye come a hollerin' an' a blamin' me, if he takes a bit out of yer leg."

"Poof! You keep back if ye'r fright'ned. Let me alone. I'll soon yank 'm inter daylight." And Billy made ready to haul at the chain. "Come out o' that, ye brute," he cried. "Yo! ho! out ye come!" And he pulled with all his might.

There was a fine old clatter as the iron kettle came clinkety-clink-clank on to the cobble stones; and Dick just lay down on the ground, fairly doubled up with laughing.

"Look out, Billy," he yelled amidst his convulsions of glee, "look out. That badger 'll bite ye through yer leggin's."

For a minute Billy was speechless. He felt so sick and faint-hearted that ordinary common-place language would have been an insult to his feelings. "You tarnation fraud!" he at last managed to gasp, as he glanced from the battered kettle at his feet towards his spluttering friend.

But merriment is infectious, and the supreme ridiculousness of his position appealed to Billy's sense of humour. So the flushed, angry look passed by imperceptible degrees into a sickly smile, and the smile at last became transformed into a broad grin. Then Billy sat down on the kettle, and laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks.

All of a sudden Dick recovered his gravity. "Quick, Billy," he cried, "shove the kettle back. Here's the schoolmaster comin' 'long the street."

With a more rapid flash of understanding than he had ever shown for a new rule in arithmetic, Billy grasped the situation, and pushed the kettle into the kennel out of sight. The boys stood together, just as snug and quiet as if they were setting out for Sunday-school.

"Billy," said Dick, wishful to put matters right now that the victim of his joke had become his confederate for future operations, "I didn't tell a lie. There's a live badger in

the stable as true as I'm standin' here. But I never said 'twas in the kennel."

Billy, however, was intent only on the business in hand. The prospect of sport caused the personal humiliation of a minute ago to be forgotten. There was no need, nor time, for explanations.

"Whish! Stow all that," he whispered, eagerly. "Let's meet 'm at the gate."

The two conspirators sauntered towards the entrance to the yard, as the schoolmaster, an elderly, grave-faced man, drew near to the stable buildings.

"Good day, sir," said Billy, as both youngsters jerked their hands towards their caps awkwardly, but none the less deferentially.

"Ah! how do you do, boys?" responded the teacher, coming to a halt and bestowing a pleasant nod of recognition on his pupils. "I hope you are enjoying your holidays?"



"I HOPE YOU ARE ENJOYING YOUR HOLIDAYS?"

"Yes, sir, first class," replied Dick. Then Billy boldly opened the campaign. "Please, Mr. Brown, do you know the difference between a mountain badger and a prairie badger?"

"I fancy I do, my lad. The one's darker than the other."

"Well, sir, Dick's father's had a live badger brought to him by Grizzly Jim, and we don't know which kind it is." Billy skated very cleverly on the thin ice of truth.

"Just let me have a sight of the animal," said the schoolmaster. At the same moment

he followed the direction of Dick's look, and there and then fell unsuspectingly into the trap prepared for him. "Ah! I see you've got him chained up in the kennel," he remarked, as he stepped into the stable yard.

"Do badgers bite?" asked Dick, evading the issue with splendidly assumed innocence.

"Oh! they don't show their teeth much, unless they're badgered," replied Mr. Brown, with a laugh, thoroughly pleased with himself at having been able to perpetrate a little joke. "Let's have him out, boys. I'll soon tell whether he's a mountain badger or a prairie badger."

Dick and Billy hung back, apparently fearful of approaching too near to the kennel.

"Don't be afraid, my lads," continued the master, in an encouraging way. "He's all safe at the end of a chain. See: I'll pull him out for you. Ya! hoop! Out you come, my fine fellow."

And the schoolmaster lugged at the chain; and clinkety-clink-clank came the iron kettle on to the cobble stones.

No respect for either age or authority could restrain the boys from going off into a fit of laughter. Their teacher's face was a study; its look of blank amazement would have made a wooden totem-pole hilarious. But they were relieved in mind, all the same, when a smile, even though a grim one, stole over the stern, pallid features of the man who had it in his power to make the lives of wayward boys utterly miserable.

"It's lucky for you young rascals that this is holiday time," remarked the schoolmaster, drily. "I've got a tawse in my desk that can bite a good deal sharper than this badger." Then, in spite of a momentary feeling of resentment, he joined in the laugh against himself.

"Please, sir," explained Dick, partly in a spirit of penitence, but mainly with a view to mitigate the offence, "the live badger that Grizzly Jim brought father is in the stable right enough. It was you yourself that went straight for the kennel."

"That's so," replied the schoolmaster, stroking his beard meditatively. "I should have remembered the maxim of the copy-books, 'Think before you leap.' Well, we're all liable to make mistakes, I suppose—even parsons," he added, after a pause, and sinking his voice almost to a whisper. He was gazing now down the street, with a far-away look in his countenance.

The boys shot a quick glance in the same

direction. A stout, pompous-looking little man, with black coat and white collar, was in sight.

"The parson's an erudite Doctor of Divinity," continued the schoolmaster, speaking low, and in an absent-minded fashion. "He's had all the advantages of a college education—a fact which he knows, and takes care to let other people know. A man of learning is the parson, and a great authority on natural history."

The boys did not hear, nor exactly understand, every word spoken; but the last sentence fell clearly on their ears, and the looks they exchanged indicated the dawning of intelligence.

"Yes; I wonder," murmured the pedagogue, reflectively, "I really wonder, now, whether the parson could tell the difference between a mountain badger and a prairie badger."

"By golly!" screamed Billy, in frantic excitement at the full flash of comprehension. "Jam the kettle back into the kennel, Dick. Don't say a word, Mr. Brown; please don't. Leave him to us."

The schoolmaster, chuckling to himself, began to examine a rose-bush growing against the wall. Soon the parson was at the gate.

"Good evening, Mr. Brown," he called out.

"Good evening," mumbled the teacher, hardly daring to look up from the roses.

"What have we here?" continued the clergyman, observing the unwonted position of the kennel, and also noticing the flurried look on the boys' faces. "What have we here?" he repeated, coming forward into the yard.

"Please, sir," began Dick, a dig in the ribs from Billy having warned him that it was his turn to open fire. "Griekly Jim's brought father a real live badger."

"A badger, and a live one! Well?"

"And schoolmaster don't seem to be able to tell whether it's a mountain badger or a prairie badger," added Dick, with a grin, adroitly bringing the third confederate into the field of action.

"Didn't you examine the teeth, Mr. Brown?" asked the parson. "The colour of the fur is no real test, you know."

"I can't say I've looked at its teeth," replied the teacher, with a somewhat ghastly smile. He had not bargained for being anything more than a passive witness of the parson's discomfiture, but here he was now, by Dick's act of unblushing treachery, thrust into the position of an active accomplice.

"Well, we must ascertain the animal's dentition. You see, in a mountain badger, which is more carnivorous than the prairie variety, the canine teeth are more fully developed." As the schoolmaster had said, the parson was assuredly a learned man, and an authority on natural history, to have all this information so readily at his command.

"But how are you going to look at his teeth?" asked Billy, practically. "I reckon badgers bite."

"I'll soon show you, my boy," replied the parson, with a patronizing smile. "He's in this kennel, is he?"

Billy's only response was a smile of satisfaction like that worn by the cat when he spied that the door of the canary's cage had been left open. But the clergyman did not wait for an answer, for, turning directly to Dick, he asked the boy whether he could find him some such thing as a piece of sacking.

"I guess I can," responded Dick, darting off like a shot towards the stables. Within the minute he was back with an old corn-bag. The parson was in the act of turning up his coat-sleeves, and was still discoursing learnedly upon the carnivorous and frugivorous tastes of the different species of the plantigrade family. The schoolmaster was listening attentively, speaking not one word: his attitude was a deferential one, or a guilty one, according to the observer's point of view.

"That will do first class, my boy," said the minister, taking the sack from Dick's hands. "Now, you two lads, pull the chain gently, and I'll get this round the badger as he emerges from the kennel. We must look out for his claws, you know, as well as for his teeth; because the badger, being a burrowing animal, is armed with long sharp claws, which he also adapts to purposes of self-defence, using them with great courage and effect when attacked. Slowly now, boys; cautious does it. Here he comes! There you are! I have him all safe!"

And the parson, as a heap of accumulating straw began to appear at the mouth of the kennel, pushed in the sack, and wrapped it tightly round the black object beyond.

"Pull now again, boys; gently. That's right. Now he's out."

Then the parson paused, and looked a bit puzzled. "This badger must have been injured, surely. He doesn't show much fight." Saying these words, he proceeded to cautiously raise one corner of the sacking. "Whoa! now; steady. No snapping, you brute," continued the parson, in a purring, conciliatory voice, as he slowly lifted the bag,

The spout of the iron kettle met his dumfounded gaze!

Dick and Billy were by this time hiding behind the water-barrel, stuffing handkerchiefs into their mouths. The schoolmaster looked down with a gleeful grin it was impossible to repress.

"What is the meaning of this, Mr. Brown?" sputtered the parson, rising to his feet. The flush on his face was due less to resentment than to wounded pride.

"It just means, Mr. Blinkers, that these young scamps first fooled me, and for the life of me I can't deny but I've enjoyed the passing the joke on to you."

The schoolmaster laughed outright, but the parson still looked painfully self-conscious.

"The miserable little prevaricators!" he muttered.

"No," said the teacher, "you can't call them that. The boys haven't spoken a word that's untrue, because the badger, I believe, is actually in the stable over there. In taking it for granted that the beast was in this kennel, we rushed to conclusions, and have had to pay the penalty."

The mortified expression on the parson's face became somewhat softened. He gazed in a half-rueful, half-amused way at the old iron kettle, still partially covered by the sacking.

"To think that I was led into talking about the denition of that—that—infernal thing," he sighed. "Oh! it would need a layman to express my feelings," he added, clenching his fists as if in impotent despair, while with a feeble smile he glanced at the schoolmaster.

"Well," laughed the latter, "strong language isn't in my line any more than yours, Mr. Blinkers, so I'm afraid I can't oblige. I fancy, however, that if ever again anyone asks you or me the difference between a mountain badger and a prairie badger we'll be just a trifle shy at answering—eh, my friend?"

The parson laughed outright; the fit of dudgeon was finally past. And when the two men left the stable yard arm-in-arm, the mischief-makers, who still remained discreetly invisible, could see the backs and shoulders of both of them fairly shaking with laughter.

Round the corner, the schoolmaster and the minister met the hotel-keeper standing at the front door of his hostelry; and with the greatest good humour in the world they told him the story. The joke was really too excellent to keep; moreover, it was sure to go the round of the whole town before the world was



"NO STAFFING, YOU SAUTE," OBSERVED THE PARSON."

many hours older, so that the victims consulted their own personal comfort best by leading off the inevitable laugh, and so, in a measure at least, disarming ridicule.

"The whippersnappers!" said the hoary host, hardly knowing at first whether to condole with the dignitaries of church and school or to indulge the merriment that was bubbling up within him.

"Boys will be boys," remarked the parson, condescendingly.

"And the trick was cleverly done," added the schoolmaster, appreciatively. He was in reality too overjoyed at his own success in having hauled the parson into the pillory alongside of him to feel any resentment.

"Oh! well, we do need a laugh sometimes in this dull place," replied the hotel-keeper, allowing the broad smile hitherto repressed to suffuse his rubicund countenance. But he kept his mirth within moderate bounds so long as the others were in hearing. When they were gone, however, loud and long was his laughter.

"Dick, the little cuss!" he cried, slapping his thigh. "And Billy, that young varmint! It'll tickle his dad to death when he hears it. To fool the schoolmaster showed a bit of pluck. But to take down the parson—oh,

lor!" And the jolly innkeeper laughed till his sides ached.

After a little time Grizzly Jim slouched into the bar, and the story was retailed for his benefit. The old trapper laughed heartily, although in the silent way his profession had taught him.

"Blame my skin!" he exclaimed, "if it ain't the foxiest thing in the snarin' line I've struck for a long time. But I reckon, boss, I'll take a hand now in this 'ere game. You fix up an excuse to git the youngsters out of the yard for ten minutes, and I reckon I'll make 'em skin their eyes with 'measement next time they yank out that badger."

Jim sauntered round the front of the house, while the host went direct to the stable yard. He found the two boys in close confabulation near the dog-kennel; and he also quietly observed that the kettle was again inside, so that the trap was clearly baited for the next victim that might chance to come around.

"Halloo, Billy!" cried the hotel-keeper, apparently unobservant of the fact that the kennel was not in its usual place, and quite ignorant of the game that was being played; "can you help Dick eat some apples?"

"Can a duck swim?" asked the youngster, perkily, by way of reply. Every urchin in the place was on terms of easy familiarity with mine host of the inn.

"Then round you come, the pair of you, to the orchard." And for the next quarter of an hour the boys' game was changed—badgers were out and apples were in.

Meanwhile Grizzly Jim was losing no time. When he saw the coast clear, he walked up the yard and entered the stable. There he dexterously caught the badger by the nape of the neck; it was not a full-grown animal, and the experienced trapper had no difficulty in handling it. He carried it out at arm's length, the beast clawing the air vigorously but vainly. Reaching the kennel, Jim quickly substituted the badger for the kettle at the end of the chain. Then, when the captive had retreated to the furthest recess of its new quarters, he carefully re-arranged the straw litter; and, tossing the discarded kettle into the wood-shed, sauntered away with a sardonic grin on his sun-dried countenance. He crossed the street to the grocery store opposite, whence he could command a view of the yard.

A few minutes later the boys, their pockets stuffed full of apples, returned to the scene of their exploits, followed at a little distance

by the hotel-keeper. The latter wore a look of good-humoured expectancy; for, although he did not know precisely what the trapper's plans were, he felt sure that there was fun in near prospect. Dick was busy munching an apple and cogitating how it would be possible to victimize his father, when his eye caught sight of Grizzly Jim crossing the street from the grocery store with a big box on his shoulders.

"I guess, dad, here's Jim a-comin' to take that badger away," remarked the boy, indicating by means of the half-eaten apple in his hand the lanky figure of the trapper.

"Most likely," answered his father, with a merry twinkle in his eye.

Billy, however, had at once seen the possibilities of this new development, and his face lit up instantly with all the keen excitement of a fox-terrier in the act of pouncing on a rat. "We must take a rise out o' Grizzly Jim," he whispered eagerly to his comrade in mischief.

As for Jim, he seemed to play right into the young rascals' hands, for the first remark he made was this: "The schoolmaster has jest bin sayin', boys, that you've got my badger in that 'ere dog-kennel."

"Wal, and what if we have?" asked Billy, boldly.

"Oh! I'm makin' no complaint. But here's his box for the railroad, and I think we'd best put him in it right now. P'raps you'll lend me a hand, youngsters?"

"Right you are, Jim," cried both boys with alacrity, advancing towards the kennel.

"Did jever know sich luck?" asked Billy, in a whisper, nudging his companion with his elbow.

"It's 'nough to make a feller die with laughin'," chuckled Dick, under his breath.

"Guess, then, yer not afear'd o' badgers, you boys?" drawled Jim, setting down the box.

"Not hadgers of this sort," replied Billy, with a grimace.

"So you've found out this 'un's only a babby?" continued the trapper; "hasn't got all his teeth yet, eh, an' couldn't scratch very hard if he tried?" As Jim spoke he picked up the slack of the chain, to the boys' intense delight.

"I reckon the badger at the end o' that chain won't hurt us much," responded Billy, airily. But Dick had to turn his face away to hide the laughter with which he was now almost bursting.

"Wal, boys, if I pull 'm out, you'll ketch 'm, will ye, an' shove 'm in the box?"

"Right you are, Jim. You jest pull, and we'll grab."

"But p'raps you'd be safer to let me come an' help ye hold the critter," added the trapper, shaking his head doubtfully.

"Help be blowed," cried Billy. "I reckon we don't need no help to manage this 'ere outfit, eh, Dick?" And the boys laughed in each other's faces, as they carried the box close up to the kennel, and opened the lid in readiness.

"Right ye are, sonnies," replied Jim.

ished eyes of Grizzly Jim, the boys fairly flung themselves upon the black object at the end of the chain.

Then there followed, oh! such a yelling and a screeching, such a snapping and a snarling! Dick rolled over Billy, and boys and badger were mixed up in a squirming heap.

"Shall I come and help ye hold the critter?" called out the trapper, cheerfully.

"No, but come and help us let him go," screamed Dick.



"BOYS AND BADGER WERE MIXED UP IN A SQUIRMING HEAP."

"Have yer own way. But don't ye forget I gave ye fair warnin'."

"We can look after ourselves, you bet," answered Billy, impatiently. "Jest you haul away."

"Wal, here we go," said Jim, a faint smile showing on his thin lips. "Grip him the moment he shows his nose. Don't be frightened at the sight of his claws."

The lads were stooping ready to grab at the old iron kettle the moment it should make its appearance. Both were chuckling with glee. And the best of the joke was that Grizzly Jim had brought the whole thing right upon himself!

"Hoop, la!" cried Jim, and with a pull that would have dragged a camel off its legs, he jerked the occupant of the kennel into the open.

In their cagerness as to who should hold aloft the spurious badger before the aston-

"My sakes!" roared Billy; "he's got me by the leg."

But at this stage Grizzly Jim came to the rescue. The young badger was quickly caught, and popped into the box, while the disconcerted and crestfallen urchins struggled to their feet.

"Guess badgers are kind o' more savage beasties than ye reckoned on," remarked the trapper, with dry sarcasm.

"No wonder the schoolmaster and the parson were skeered," laughed the hotel-keeper, who had enjoyed the whole scene from a little distance.

Then it dawned upon the youngsters how neatly the tables had been turned on them; so, in spite of torn clothes and scratched skins, they did their best like true sportsmen to grin and look pleasant. But it will be some time before they try to take another rise out of Grizzly Jim.

A Common Crystal.

By JOHN R. WATKINS.



Hard to believe, but true. The locomotive shown in the illustration below rests and runs upon a lake of salt—a surface almost as solid as the road-bed of a great passenger system. The engine puffs to and fro all day long on the snow-like crust, while a score of steam-ploughs make progress with a rattling, rasping noise, dividing the lake into long and glittering mounds of salt, which are shovelled by busy Indians on to the waiting cars. The sun shines with almost overwhelming

Here in Salton, striking sights may be seen in the full light of day. One gets some little idea of them from the photographs, but the general effect of this huge natural store-house of commercial salt, its enormous crystal lake, and its massive pyramids of white awaiting shipment, can be but partially conceived from our pictures.

To enter into a complete description of the remarkable industry which transfers a common crystal from a lake of brine to the working-man's table would be beyond the limits of our magazine. It would



[Point]

LOADING A TRAIN ON A LAKE OF SALT, IN SOUTHERY CALIFORNIA.

[Photograph]

power, and the dazzling carpet of salt stretches away to the horizon, where it disappears.

The scene is in Salton, in far-off Southern California. Two months ago we described a wonderful city of salt which for centuries has existed below the surface of the earth.

involve a discussion of chemical symbols and formulae which would make the printed page a cryptograph. Better is it, briefly, to say that much of the salt found in the domestic salt-cellar comes from the water of the sea, which, by evaporation, is turned from liquid into snowy powder. In Salton

Lake, which lies 280ft. below the sea level; the brine rises in the bottom of the marsh from numerous springs in the neighbouring foot-hills, and, quickly evaporating, leaves deposits of almost pure salt, varying from 10in. to 20in. in thickness, and thus forming a substantial crust. The temperature ranges from 120 to 150 degrees, and all the labour is performed by Coahuilla Indians, who work ten hours a day, and seem not in the least to mind the enervating heat. In fact, these Indians are so inured to the fatiguing work

The interesting history of the salt industry in California is largely associated with the name of Plummer Brothers, who in 1864, in the person of the late Mr. J. A. Plummer, made the first genuine attempt to produce a first-class domestic salt. The extensive and striking premises of this noted firm in Centerville, California, are shown in the two illustrations on the next page. Situated as the district is close to the bay, the industry is dependent to a certain extent upon the tides. The early spring tides have little effect in drawing away the



FIGURE 10

A SALT-PLOUGH AT WORK.

L'Esperance

that they are not affected by the dazzling sunlight, which distresses the eyes of those unaccustomed to it, and compels the use of coloured glasses. One of these Indians may be seen sitting on the steam-plough shown on this page. He is one of a tribe of large and well-developed men—peaceable, civilized, sober, and industrious, living in comfortable houses built by the New Liverpool Salt Works, with tables, chairs, forks, spoons, and many of the necessary articles of domestic civilization. He guides his plough over the long stretches of salt, running lightly at first over the surface to remove any vestiges of desert sand blown from far away, and then setting the blade to run 6in. deep in furrows 8ft. wide. Each plough harvests daily over 700 tons of pure salt, which is then taken to the mill to be ground and placed in sacks. Scores of men assist in the harvest by loading small “dump-cars,” or trollies, on portable rails, the cargo being finally dumped on the large train or else carried direct to the manufactory.

impurities which the river-floods bring into the bay; but the tides of June and July, rising as they do to a height of 6ft. or 7ft., fill the marshes with a water fairly pure. The salt-makers have prepared for this influx of water by making reservoirs in large clay-bottomed tracts of marsh land, and have cleared them of weeds and grass. The water flows in and fills the reservoirs to a depth of from 15in. to 18in., and the gates are then closed.

Like a large family, descending in size from father to youngest son, the six or seven evaporating ponds of a salt works appear. The large reservoir, being the father of this series of ponds, contains the gross amount of brine, the last two or three being called lime-ponds, owing to the amount of gypsum, lime, etc., precipitated at this stage of evaporation. Not to go too deeply into chemistry, it may be said that the brine lingers in the last of these ponds until a density of 106 degrees is obtained. The surface of the liquid is now dotted by small patches of white which



From a Photo by]

TRANSPORTING SALT IN GREAT TRAYS.

[Mr. C. J. F. F. F.]

accumulate into streaks of drift-salt. This interesting development is shown in the illustration above, the streaks of salt looking like patches of surf on the sands of the sea-shore. The liquid is now run into crystallizing vats,

where it remains until the salt crystals have formed at the bottom. It sometimes takes two months for a crop of salt to develop. In harvesting, the workman, donning large, flat sandals of wood, enters the vat with a galvanized



From a Photo by]

SALT CRYSTALLIZING POND.

[Mr. C. J. F. F.]



[Rev. Henry Lumsden, D. D., Alcock's note.]

SALT-MAKING IN RAJPUTANA.

[Photo. from]



Like River Land, & D. - R. - R.

MEASURING SALT HEAPS IN RAJPUTANA.

Photo. [unclear]

shovel, and marks off on the surface of the salt a series of parallel lines. This process enables the labourers to toss the lumps into uniform piles. A strict examination is made of every shovelful, in order that impurities may be eliminated. Our illustrations show these conical mounds of salt, and the transfer of the salt by means of barrels to large platforms, where the crystal product is thrown into huge pyramids, sometimes 25 ft. high. Here it remains, bleaching and solidifying for a year. It is, indeed, a picturesque sight to see these ghost-like pyramids grow in their might from day to day.

Into the processes by which these massive mounds of hardened salt are crushed and distributed to the markets, we need not enter; nor need we name the varieties of salt which are so distributed. We find something more interesting in turning from California to Central India, where in Rajputana a tremendous industry in salt is carried on, and where we may see the same little piles of salt that we have noted in the previous illustrations.

In the background of the large full-page picture, which we have just passed, may be seen colossal heaps of salt, and in the foreground scores of men, women, and children wading in the vat of sluggish brine, from which, by dint of constant effort, emerge the little cones of white. The overseers stand by to direct, and the scene is one of tremendous interest and activity, punctuated by babble of voices. We get a closer view of these cones in our last illustration, in which we find the coolies measuring the height of the cones. One thing we miss in these vistas of barren whiteness—the sight of the labour-saving machinery so noticeable in our early illustrations. Is it an object-lesson in the differences between East and West?

A Peep into "Punch."

By I. HOLT SCHOOLING.

[The Proprietors of "Punch" have given special permission to reproduce the accompanying illustrations. This is the first occasion when a periodical has been enabled to present a selection from Mr. Punch's famous pages.]

PART II. — 1850 TO 1854.



SOME while ago, in the pantomime "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," Ali Baba's brother, who had found his way into the secret cave, ran about in a most ludicrous manner eagerly picking from the floor diamonds, rubies, and emeralds as big as ostrich-eggs: as fast as he picked up another



4--THIS INITIAL LETTER "L" IS HER JOHN TERNIEL'S FIRST "PUNCH" DRAWING: NOVEMBER 20, 1886.

gem he let one fall from his already loaded arms. I laughed at Ali Baba's brother, but did not feel sympathetic.

Now, I do not laugh, and I do feel sympathetic with A. B.'s brother—for in choosing these pictures from *Punch*, one no sooner picks out a gem, with an "I'll have you," than on the turn of a page a better picture comes, and the other has to be dropped. It goes as much against my grain to leave such a host of good things hidden in *Punch* as it went against the covetous desires of

Ali Baba's wicked brother to leave so many fine big gems behind him in the richly-stored cave. However, Mr. Punch's whole store of riches is, after all, accessible to anyone whose Open Sesame! is a little cheque, and so one has some consolation for being able to show here only a very small selection from Mr. Punch's famous gallery of wit and art which that discerning connoisseur has been collecting during the last sixty years.

The year 1850 was a notable one for *Punch*, for then John Tenniel joined the famous band of Punchites. His first contribution is shown in No. 1, the beautiful initial letter *L* with the accompanying sketch, which, although it is nearly fifty years old, and is here in a reduced size, yet distinctly shows even to the non-expert eye the touch of that same wonderful hand which in this week's *Punch* (November 26th, 1898) drew the cartoon showing Britannia and the United States as two blue-jackets in jovial comradeship under the sign of the "Two Cross Flags," with jolly old landlord *Punch* saying to them, "Fill up, my hearties! It looks like 'dirty weather' ahead, but you two—John and Johnathan—will see it through—together!"

Glancing at Nos. 2 and 3—Leech's sketch in No. 3 is, by the way, a truthfully graphic reminder to the writer of the first time



By "One is, I'm!" You're an oldie, so to speak! I see you are quite young!



LORD JACK THE GIANT KILLER.

8.—THIS IS MR JOHN TENNIEL'S FIRST CARTOON; FEBRUARY 5, 1851.

Sir John Tenniel's first cartoon is shown in No. 8. It represents Lord John Russell as David, backed by Mr. Punch and by John Bull, attacking Cardinal Wiseman as Goliath, who is at the head of a host of Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops. A very interesting mention is made by Mr. Spielmann, in his "History of Punch," of the circumstances which caused Tenniel to join *Punch*, and to become the greatest cartoonist

the world has produced:—

Had the Pope not "aggressed" by appointing archbishops and bishops to English sees [This caused all the exaggerated bother and flutter of 1849.—J. H. S.], and so raised the score of which Lord John Russell and Mr. Punch really seem to have been the leaders, Doyle would not have resigned, and no opening would have been made for Tenniel.

Sir John, indeed, was by no means enamoured of the prospect of being a *Punch* artist, when Mark Lemon [the editor in 1850.—J. H. S.] made his overtures to him. He was rather indignant than otherwise, as his line was high art, and his severe drawing above "fooling." "Do they suppose," he asked a friend, "that there is anything funny about me?" He meant, of course, in his art, for privately he was well recognised as a humorist; and little did he know, in the moment of hesitation before he accepted the offer, that he was struggling against a kindly destiny.

Thus we may say that the "Popish Scare" of fifty years ago was a main cause of the Tenniel cartoons in the *Punch* of to-day.

The picture in No. 9,



THE NEW SIAMESE TWINS.

9.—ILLUSTRATING THE CONSEQUENCE OF FERTILE LAND IN THREE REGARDS AND FRANGE, BY LEMON, 1851.



FIRST DESIGN.



SECOND DESIGN.



THIRD DESIGN.

legend "Sketch of the Patent Street-sweeping Machines lately introduced at Paris" appeared on p. 264 of "Mr. Punch's" journal. It represented a couple of cannon drawn with the waviest of outlines, and the letter "A" marked upon the ground directly in their line of fire [see No. 10.—J. H. S.]

This was the first appearance of Keene's pencil in the pages which he was destined to adorn with increasing frequency as time went on for nearly forty years. The sketch is unsigned. Indeed, it was only at the urgent request of his friend, Mr. Silver, in whose brain the notion had originated, that the drawing was made, the artist bluntly expressing his opinion that the joke was a mighty poor one.

Pictures 11 to 13 bring us to No. 14, which contains small facsimile reproductions of the six designs on the front of the *Punch*-wrapper, which preceded the well-known design by Richard Doyle, now used every week. These little pictures have been made direct from the original *Punch*-wrappers in my possession, as it was found impossible to get satisfactory prints in so small a size as these from the much larger blocks that Messrs. Cassell and Company



FOURTH DESIGN.



FIFTH DESIGN.



SIXTH DESIGN.

very kindly lent to me, impressions from which can be seen by readers who may like to study the detail of these designs in Mr. Spielmann's "History of Punch," which contains a full account of them. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that when these designs were made it would have been impossible to obtain from them the excellent reduced facsimiles now shown, which, by the way, have only now been obtained after several attempts—as each of these pretty little pictures has been reduced from the full size of the ordinary *Punch*-page.

The first design was made in 1841 by A. S. Henning, Mr. Punch's first cartoonist. In the early years of *Punch* the design for the wrapper was changed for each half-yearly volume, and early in 1842 the second design was adopted: this was drawn by Hablot K. Browne ("Phiz"), who worked for *Punch* during 1842-1844, leaving *Punch* in 1844, because the paper could not at that time stand the financial strain of the two big guns, Leech and "Phiz." H. K. Browne went back to Mr. Punch in later years, and Mr. Spielmann has recorded that this "brave worker, who would not admit his stroke of paralysis, but called it rheumatism, could still draw when the pencil was tied to his fingers and answered the swaying of his body."

The third wrapper is by William Harvey, and was used for Vol. III. of *Punch* in the latter part of 1842. The artist "spread consternation in the office by sending in a charge of twelve guineas" for this Vol. xii.—26.



SECOND ADVICE.

Illustr. "Hans & Wren, Gaiters?"
 Question: "A wren? Is it?"
 Answer: "A wren? Is it?—No, no!"
 Question: "Confound it, then, I never heard of an 'Hans'!"
 Answer: "An 'Hans' is a woman's name, not a man's!"

15.—BY LEECH. 1850.

rim of the drum—and it was used in the latter part of 1843. Then, in January, 1844, Richard Doyle, Mr. Punch's latest recruit, was employed to design the new wrapper—the sixth of our illustration No. 14. This design was used until January, 1849, and then Doyle made the alterations which distinguish this sixth wrapper from the one now in use and which has been used ever since.

A little boy's advice to his grandfather is illustrated by Leech in No. 15, and No. 16 suggests an added horror of war. The humorous prospectus in No. 17 concludes with the words:

Something turns up every day to justify the most sanguine expectation that an El Dorado has really been discovered. In the meantime, the motto of the Company is "Oculum Sine Dig." [Ease without dignity]. Applications for Shares to be made immediately to the above addresses, as a preference will be shown to respectable people.

By the way, when Mr. Punch wrote this skit about "Gold in England," he and his public were



PROMPT SERVICE FOR THE BARRICADE.

16.—BY TERRY THE ENEMY. 1850.



PUNCH'S MEDAL FOR A



PEACE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

21.—SUGGESTED BY THE MILITARY AND NAVAL REVIEWS HELD BY THE QUEEN IN 1853.

"Verdant Green," and this is one of four caricature illustrations of the then novel art of photography, which Mr. Bradley did for *Punch* in the year 1853. We read just now how we are indirectly indebted to a Pope [Pius IX.] for Sir John Tenniel's cartoons, and in connection with the Rev. Edward Bradley's picture in No. 20, it may be noted that six clergymen, at the least, have contributed to Mr. Punch's pages.

No. 21 shows *Punch's* "Medal for a Peace Assurance Society," a pictorialization in 1853 of the still true old saying: "To secure peace be prepared for war." An unhappy necessity, as some people think, but without doubt the only practical way to assure peace, and, as usual, Mr. Punch puts the thing in a nutshell with his two mottoes on the medal: "Attention" and "Ready, aye Ready." Our "attention" and "readiness" of 1853 did not,

however, keep us out of the Crimean War, which began in the spring of 1854, despite the efforts of the Peace Society and of John Bright, who are caricatured in No. 22. But modern authorities generally believe that the Crimean War might have been prevented by a more vigorous policy than that of Lord Aberdeen, whose Administration is chiefly remembered by what is now thought to have been a gross blunder. This



THE ROYAL ARMS AS IMPROVED BY THE PEACE SOCIETY.

1. FROM THE REVIEW OF THE REVIEW, 1853, BY THE REV. EDWARD BRADLEY.

22.—MR. PUNCH'S HIT AT JOHN BRIGHT AND THE PEACE SOCIETY. 1853

specially good. The youth (on Westminster Bridge—time, two on a foggy morning) white with fear walks on perfectly straight without taking any notice of the rough who asks: "Did you want to buy a good razor?"—but he is taking a lot of notice though. The youth walks exactly like one does walk when a beggar pesters as he slouches alongside just behind one, but here the frightened youth has good cause indeed for the shaking fear that Leech has by some magic put into these strokes of his pencil. The "Reduced Tradesman" too is exactly good—but let the picture speak for itself, it wants no words of mine.



30.—OUT OF THE RAIN. 1854.

There is an amusing "Russian" account, in No. 28, of our troubles at home during the Crimean War; and No. 29 shows a street-Arab asking the Queen's coachman, "I say, Coachy, are you engaged?"

Glancing at Nos. 30 and 31, we see in No. 32 Leech's picture of the heroic charge at the Battle of Balaklava, on October 25, 1854, with Lord Cardigan leading his famous Light Brigade of Cavalry. Here are Mr. Punch's lines on this gallant charge, which was subsequently immortalized by Tennyson in his "Charge of the Light Brigade":—



ENTER MR. BOTTLE, THE BUTLER.

Make fast "Dinner" that a corner! Dress and, dinner, and the rest of the world in the room. (The rest is a new invention.)

31.—BY LEACH, 1854.

THE BATTLE OF BALAKLAVA.

(Nine verses, on the battle generally, precede the lines below, which refer to the charge of the Light Brigade, illustrated by Leech, in No. 32.—J. H. S.)

But who is there, with patient tongue the sorry tale to tell,
How our Light Brigade, true martyrs, to the point of honour, fell!
"Two, sudden, but 'twas not warlike," that charge of war and wrack,
That led six hundred to the guns, and brought two hundred back!

Enough! the order came to charge, and charge they did—like ones:
While shot and shell and rifle ball played on them down the glen,
Though thirty guns were ranged in front, not one drew back breath,
Unflinching, unquestioning, they rode upon their death!

Not by five times their number of all arms could they be stayed;
And with two lives for one of ours, then, the Russians paid:
Till soon with shot and musket ball, a spout and showering fell—
Life was against those fearful odds,—from the grapple they withdrew.

But still like wounded lions, their faces to the foe,
More conquests than conquests, they fell back, some and slow;
With dimmed arms and weary steeds—all bruised and villed and worn—
In this the wreck of all that rode so bravely on this morn'
Where thirty answered master as dawn now answer you,
Oh, woe's me for each officer!—Oh, woe's me for each man!

Whom was the blame? Name not his name, but rather seek to hide,
If he live, leave him to conscience—no God, if he have died:
For you, true lords of honour, you have done your duty well:
Your country asks not, to what end! it knows but how you fell!

NOTE.—In Part I. of this article, the "Portrait of the Railway Poet," illustration No. 27, was erroneously ascribed to Doyle; the artist was William Newman, one of Mr. Punch's last recruits.



A TRUMP CHARGE.

32.—THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE. BY LEACH, NOVEMBER 25, 1854.

(To be continued.)

Miss Cayley's Adventures.

XII.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE UNPROFESSIONAL DETECTIVE.

By GRANT ALLEN.

"**L**S Lady Georgina at home?" The discreet man-servant in sober black clothes eyed me suspiciously. "No, miss," he answered. "That is to say—no, ma'am. Her ladyship is still at Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst's—the late Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst's, I mean—in Park Lane North. You know the number, ma'am?"

"Yes, I know it," I replied, with a gasp; for this was indeed a triumph. My one fear had been lest Lord Southminster should already have taken possession—why, you will see hereafter; and it relieved me to learn that Lady Georgina was still at hand to guard my husband's interests. She had been living at the house, practically, since her brother's death. I drove round with all speed, and flung myself into my dear old lady's arms.

She kissed me on both cheeks with unwonted tenderness. "Lois," she cried, with tears in her eyes, "you're a brick!" It was not exactly poetical at such a moment, but from her it meant more than much gushing phraseology.

"And you're here in possession!" I murmured.

The Cantankerous Old Lady nodded. She was in her element, I must admit. She dearly loved a row—above all, a family row; but to be in the thick of a family row, and to feel herself in the right, with the law against her—that was joy such as Lady Georgina had seldom before experienced. "Yes, dear," she burst out volubly, "I'm in possession, thank Heaven. And what's more, they won't onst me without a legal process. I've been here, off and on, you know, ever since poor dear Marmy died, looking after



"I'VE HELD THE FORT BY MAIN FORCE."

"Kiss me," I cried, flushed. "I am your niece!" But she knew it already, for our movements had been fully reported by this time (with picturesque additions) in the morning papers. Imagination, ill-developed in the English race, seems to concentrate itself in the lower order of journalists.

things for Harold; and I shall look after them still, till Bertie Southminster succeeds in ejecting me, which won't be easy. Oh, I've held the fort by main force, I can tell you; held it like a Trojan. Bertie's in a precious great hurry to move in, I can see; but I won't allow him. He's been

down here this morning, futuously blustering, and trying to carry the post by storm, with a couple of policemen."

"Policemen!" I cried. "To turn you out?"

"Yes, my dear, policemen: but (the Lord be praised) I was too much for him. There are legal formalities to fulfil yet; and I won't budge an inch, Lois, not one inch, my dear, till he's fulfilled every one of them. Mark my words, child, that boy's up to some devilry."

"He is," I answered.

"Yes, he wouldn't be in such a rampaging hurry to get in—being as lazy as he's empty-headed—takes after Gwendoline in that—if he hadn't some excellent reason for wishing to take possession: and depend upon it, the reason is that he wants to get hold of something or other that's Harold's. But he sha'n't if I can help it; and thank my stars, I'm a dour woman to reckon with. If he comes, he comes over my old bones, child. I've been overhauling everything of Marmy's, I can tell you, to checkmate the boy if I can; but I've found nothing yet, and till

"I know you will, dear," I assented, kissing her, "and so I shall venture to leave you, while I go out to institute another little inquiry."

"What inquiry?"

I shook my head. "It's only a surmise," I said, hesitating. "I'll tell you about it later. I've had time to think while I've been coming back in the train, and I've thought of many things. Mount guard till I return, and mind you don't let Lord Southminster have access to anything."

"I'll shoot him first, dear." And I believe she meant it.

I drove on in the same cab to Harold's solicitor. There I laid my fresh doubts at once before him. He rubbed his bony hands. "You've hit it!" he cried, charmed. "My dear madam, you've hit it! I never did like that will. I never did like the signatures, the witnesses, the look of it. But what could I do? Mr. Tillington propounded it. Of course it wasn't my business to go dead against my own client."

"Then you doubted Harold's honour, Mr. Hayes?" I cried, flushing.



"NEVER!" HE ANSWERED. "NEVER!"

I've satisfied myself on that point, I'll hold the fort still, if I have to barricade that pesty-faced scoundrel of a nephew of mine out by piling the furniture against the front door—I will as sure as my name's Georgina Fawley!"

"Never!" he answered. "Never! I felt sure there must be some mistake somewhere, but not any trickery on—your husband's part. Now, *now* supply the right clue. We must look into this, immediately."

He hurried round with me at once in the same cab to the court. The incriminated will had been "impounded," as they call it; but, under certain restrictions, and subject to the closest surveillance, I was allowed to examine it with my husband's solicitor, before the eyes of the authorities. I looked at it long with the naked eye and also with a small pocket lens. The paper, as I had noted before, was the same kind of foolscap as that which I had been in the habit of using at my office in Florence; and the type-writing—was it mine? The longer I looked at it, the more I doubted it.

After a careful examination I turned round to our solicitor. "Mr. Hayes," I said, firmly, having arrived at my conclusion, "this is *not* the document I type-wrote at Florence."

"How do you know?" he asked. "A different machine? Some small peculiarity in the shape of the letters?"

"No, the rogue who typed this will was too cunning for that. He didn't allow himself to be foiled by such a scholar's mate. It is written with a Spread Eagle, the same sort of machine precisely as my own. I know the type perfectly. But—" I hesitated.

"But what?"

"Well, it is difficult to explain. There is character in typewriting, just as there is in handwriting, only, of course, not quite so much of it. Every operator is liable to his own peculiar tricks and blunders. If I had some of my own typewritten manuscript here to show you, I could soon make that evident."

"I can easily believe it. Individuality runs through all we do, however seemingly mechanical. But are the points of a sort that you could make clear in court to the satisfaction of a jury?"

"I think so. Look here, for example. Certain letters get habitually mixed up in typewriting; *c* and *v* stand next one another on the keyboard of the machine, and the person who typed this draft sometimes strikes a *c* instead of a *v*, or *v* instead of a *c*. I never do that. The letters I tend to confuse are *s* and *m*, or else *e* and *r*, which also come very near one another in the arbitrary arrangement. Besides, when I type-wrote the original of this will, I made no errors at all; I took such very great pains about it."

"And this person did make errors?"

"Yes; struck the wrong letter first, and then corrected it often by striking another rather hard on top of it. See, this was a *v* to begin with, and he turned it into a *c*.

Vol. xiv.—25.

Besides, the hand that wrote this will is heavier than mine: it comes down *thump, thump, thump*, while mine glides lightly. And the hyphens are used with a space between them, and the character of the punctuation is not exactly as I make it."

"Still," Mr. Hayes objected, "we have nothing but your word. I'm afraid, in such a case, we could never induce a jury to accept your unsupported evidence."

"I don't want them to accept it," I answered. "I am looking this up for my own satisfaction. I want to know, first, who wrote this will. And of one thing I am quite clear: it is *not* the document I drew up for Mr. Ashurst. Just look at that *x*. The *x* alone is conclusive. My typewriter had the upper right-hand stroke of the small *x* badly formed, or broken, while this one is perfect. I remember it well, because I used always to improve all my lower-case *x*'s with a pen when I re-read and corrected. I see their dodge clearly now. It is a most diabolical conspiracy. Instead of forging a will in Lord Southminster's favour, they have substituted a forgery for the real will, and then managed to make my poor Harold prove it."

"In that case, no doubt, they have destroyed the real one, the original," Mr. Hayes put in.

"I don't think so," I answered, after a moment's deliberation. "From what I know of Mr. Ashurst, I don't believe it is likely he would have left his will about carelessly anywhere. He was a secretive man, fond of mysteries and mystifications. He would be sure to conceal it. Besides, Lady Georgina and Harold have been taking care of everything in the house ever since he died."

"But," Mr. Hayes objected, "the forger of this document, supposing it to be forged, must have had access to the original, since you say the terms of the two are identical; only the signatures are forgeries. And if he saw and copied it, why might he not also have destroyed it?"

A light flashed across me all at once. "The forger *did* see the original," I cried, "but not the fair copy. I have it all now! I detect their trick! It comes back to me vividly! When I had finished typing the copy at Florence from my first rough draft, which I had taken down on the machine before Mr. Ashurst's eyes, I remember now that I threw the original into the waste-paper basket. It must have been there that evening when Higginson called and asked for the

will to take it back to Mr. Ashurst. He called for it, no doubt, hoping to open the packet before he delivered it and make a copy of the document for this very purpose. But I refused to let him have it. Before he saw me, however, he had been left by himself for ten minutes in the office; for I remember coming out to him and finding him there alone; and during that ten minutes, being what he is, you may be sure he fished out the rough draft and appropriated it!"

"That is more than likely," my solicitor nodded. "You are tracking him to his lair. We shall have him in our power."

in his plans; but who would marry such a piece of moist clay? Besides, I could never have taken anyone but Harold." Then another clue came home to me. "Mr. Hayes," I cried, jumping at it, "Higginson, who forged this will, never saw the real document itself at all; he saw only the draft: for Mr. Ashurst altered one word *vice versa* in the original at the last moment, and I made a pencil note of it on my cuff at the time: and see, it isn't here, though I inserted it in the final clean copy of the will—the word 'especially.' It grows upon me more and more each minute that the real instrument is



"WE SHALL HAVE HIM IN OUR POWER."

I grew more and more excited as the whole cunning plot unravelled itself mentally step by step before me. "He must then have gone to Lord Southminster," I went on, "and told him of the legacy he expected from Mr. Ashurst. It was five hundred pounds—a mere trifle to Higginson, who plays for thousands. So he must have offered to arrange matters for Lord Southminster if Southminster would consent to make good that sum and a great deal more to him. That odious little cad told me himself on the *funna* they were engaged in pulling 'off' a big *coup* between them. He thought then I would marry him, and that he would so secure my connivance

hidden somewhere in Mr. Ashurst's house—Harold's house—our house; and that *because* it is there, Lord Southminster is so indecently anxious to oust his aunt and take instant possession."

"In that case," Mr. Hayes remarked, "we had better go back to Lady Georgina without one minute's delay, and, while she still holds the house, institute a thorough search for it."

No sooner said than done. We jumped again into our cab and started. As we drove back, Mr. Hayes asked me where I thought we were most likely to find it.

"In a secret drawer in Mr. Ashurst's desk," I answered, by a flash of instinct, without a second's hesitation.

"How do you know there's a secret drawer?"

"I don't know it. I infer it from my general knowledge of Mr. Ashurst's character. He loved secret drawers, ciphers, cryptograms, mystery-mongering."

"But it was in that desk that your husband found the forged document," the lawyer objected.

Once more I had a flash of inspiration or intuition. "Because White, Mr. Ashurst's valet, had it in readiness in his possession," I answered, "and hid it there, in the most obvious and unconcealed place he could find, as soon as the breath was out of his master's body. I remember now Lord Southminster gave himself away to some extent in that matter. The hateful little creature isn't really clever enough, for all his cunning—and with Higginson to back him—to mix himself up in such tricks as forgery. He told me at Aden he had had a telegram from 'Marmy's valet,' to report progress; and he received another, the night Mr. Ashurst died, at Moozaffernagar. Depend upon it, White was more or less in this plot; Higginson left him the forged will when they started for India; and as soon as Mr. Ashurst died White hid it where Harold was bound to find it."

"If so," Mr. Hayes answered, "that's well; we have something to go upon. The more of them, the better. There is safety in numbers—for the honest folk. I never knew three rogues hold long together, especially when threatened with a criminal prosecution. Their confederacy breaks down before the chance of punishment. Each tries to screen himself by betraying the others."

"Higginson was the soul of this plot," I went on. "Of that you may be sure. He's a wily old fox, but we'll run him to earth yet. The more I think of it, the more I feel sure, from what I know of Mr. Ashurst's character, he would never have put that will in so exposed a place as the one where Harold says he found it."

We drew up at the door of the disputed house just in time for the siege. Mr. Hayes and I walked in. We found Lady Georgina face to face with Lord Southminster. The opposing forces were still at the stage of preliminaries of warfare.

"Look heah," the pea-green young man was observing, in his drawling voice, as we entered; "it's no use your talking, deah Georgey. This house is mine, and I won't have you meddling with it."

"This house is not yours, you odious little scamp," his aunt retorted, raising her shrill voice some notes higher than usual; "and while I can hold a stick you shall not come inside it."

"Very well, then; you drive me to hostilities, don't yah know. I'm sorry to show disrespect to your grey hairs—if any—but I shall be obliged to call in the police to eject yah."

"Call them in if you like," I answered, interposing between them. "Go out and get them! Mr. Hayes, while he's gone, send for a carpenter to break open the back of Mr. Ashurst's escritoire."

"A carpentah?" he cried, turning several degrees whiter than his pasty wont. "What for? A carpentah?"

I spoke distinctly. "Because we have reason to believe Mr. Ashurst's real will is concealed in this house in a secret drawer, and because the keys were in the possession of White, whom we believe to be your accomplice in this shallow conspiracy."

He gasped and looked alarmed. "No, you don't," he cried, stepping briskly forward. "You don't, I tell yah! Break open Marmy's desk! Why, hang it all, it's my property."

"We shall see about that after we've broken it open," I answered, grimly. "Here, this screw-driver will do. The back's not strong. Now, your help, Mr. Hayes—one, two, three; we can prise it apart between us."

Lord Southminster rushed up and tried to prevent us. But Lady Georgina, seizing both wrists, held him tight as in a vice with her dear skinny old hands. He writhed and struggled, all in vain; he could not escape her. "I've often spanked you, Bertie," she cried, "and if you attempt to interfere, I'll spank you again; that's the long and the short of it!"

He broke from her and rushed out, to call the police, I believe, and prevent our desecration of poor Marmy's property.

Inside the first shelf were several locked drawers, and two or three open ones, out of one of which Harold had fished the false will. Instinct taught me somehow that the central drawer on the left-hand side was the compartment behind which lay the secret receptacle. I prised it apart and peered about inside it. Presently, I saw a slip-panel, which I touched with one finger. The pigeon-hole flew open and disclosed a narrow slit. I clatched at something—the will! Ho, victory! the will! I raised it aloft with

a wild shout. Not a doubt of it! The real, the genuine document!

We turned it over and read it. It was my own fair copy, written at Florence, and bearing all the small marks of authenticity about it which I had pointed out to Mr. Hayes as wanting to the forged and impounded document. Fortunately, Lady Georgina and four of the servants had stood by throughout this scene, and had watched our demeanour, as well as Lord Southminster's.

We turned next to the signatures. The principal one was clearly Mr. Ashurst's—I knew it at once—his legible fat hand, "Marmaduke Courtney Ashurst." And then the witnesses? They fairly took our breath away.

"Why, Higginson's sister isn't one of them at all," Mr. Hayes cried, astonished.

A flush of remorse came over me. I saw it all now. I had misjudged that poor woman! She had the misfortune to be a rogue's sister, but, as Harold had said, was herself a most respectable and blameless person. Higginson must have forged her name to the document; that was all; and she had naturally sworn that she never signed it. He knew her honesty. It was a master-stroke of rascality.

"The other one isn't here, either," I exclaimed, growing more puzzled. "The waiter at the hotel! Why, that's another forgery! Higginson must have waited till the man was safely dead, and then used him similarly. It was all very clever. Now, who are these people who really witnessed it?"

"The first one," Mr. Hayes said, examining the handwriting, "is Sir Roger Bland, the Dorsetshire baronet: he's dead, poor fellow; but he was at Florence at the time, and I can answer for his signature. He was a client of mine, and died at Mentone. The second is Captain Richards, of the Mounted

Police: he's living still, but he's away in South Africa."

"Then they risked his turning up?"

"If they knew who the real witnesses were at all—which is doubtful. You see, as you say, they may have seen the rough draft only."

"Higginson would know," I answered. "He was with Mr. Ashurst at Florence at the time, and he would take good care to keep a watch upon his movements. In my belief, it was he who suggested this whole plot to Lord Southminster."

"Of course it was," Lady Georgina put in. "That's absolutely certain. Bertie's a rogue as well as a fool: but he's too great a fool to invent a clever rogues, and too great a knave not to join in it foolishly when anybody else takes the pains to invent it."

"And it *was* a clever rogues," Mr. Hayes interposed. "An ordinary rascal would have forged a later will in Lord Southminster's favour, and run the risk of detection; Higginson had the acuteness to forge a will exactly like the real one, and

to let your husband bear the burden of the forgery. It was as sagacious as it was ruthless."

"The next point," I said, "will be for us to prove it."

At that moment the bell rang, and one of the house-servants—all puzzled by this conflict of interests—came in with a telegram, which he handed me on a salver. I broke it open, without glancing at the envelope. Its contents baffled me: "My address is Hotel Bristol, Paris; name as usual. Send me a thousand pounds on account at once. I can't afford to wait. No shillyshallying."

The message was unsigned. For a moment, I couldn't imagine who sent it, or what it was driving at.

Then I took up the envelope. "Viscount



"VICTOR."

Southminster, 24, Park Lane North, London."

My heart gave a jump. I saw in a second that chance or Providence had delivered the conspirators into my hands that day. The telegram was from Higginson! I had opened it by accident.

It was obvious what had happened. Lord Southminster must have written to him on the result of the trial, and told him he meant to take possession of his uncle's house immediately. Higginson had acted on that hint, and addressed his telegram where he thought it likely Lord Southminster would receive it earliest. I had opened it in error, and that, too, was fortunate, for even in dealing with such a pack of scoundrels, it would never have occurred to me to violate somebody else's correspondence had I not thought it was addressed to me. But having arrived at the truth thus unintentionally, I had, of course, no scruples about making full use of my information.

I showed the despatch at once to Lady

valet," he said, quietly. "The moment has now arrived when we can begin to set these conspirators by the ears. As soon as they learn that we know all, they will be eager to inform upon one another."

I rang the bell. "Send up White," I said. "We wish to speak to him."

The valet stole up, self-accused, a timid, servile creature, rubbing his hands nervously, and suspecting mischief. He was a rat in trouble. He had thin brown hair, neatly brushed and plastered down, so as to make it look still thinner, and his face was the average narrow cunning face of the dishonest man-servant. It had an ounce of wile in it to a pound or two of servility. He seemed just the sort of rogue meanly to join in an underhand conspiracy, and then meanly to back out of it. You could read at a glance that his principle in life was to save his own bacon.

He advanced, fumbling his hands all the time, and smiling and fawning. "You wished to see me, sir?" he murmured, in a depre-



"YOU WISHED TO SEE ME, SIR?"

Georgina and Mr. Hayes. They recognised its importance. "What next?" I inquired. "Time presses. At half-past three Harold comes up for examination at Bow Street."

Mr. Hayes was ready with an apt expedient. "Ring the bell for Mr. Ashurst's

catory voice, looking sideways at Lady Georgina and me, but addressing the lawyer.

"Yes, White, I wished to see you. I have a question to ask you. *How* put the forged will in Mr. Ashurst's desk? Was it you, or some other person?"

The question terrified him. He changed colour and gasped. But he rubbed his hands harder than ever and affected a sickly smile. "Oh, sir, how should I know, sir? I had nothing to do with it. I suppose—it was Mr. Tillington."

Our lawyer pounced upon him like a hawk on a titmouse. "Don't prevaricate with me, sir," he said, sternly. "If you do, it may be worse for you. This case has assumed quite another aspect. It is you and your associates who will be placed in the dock, not Mr. Tillington. You had better speak the truth; it is your one chance, I warn you. Lie to me, and instead of calling you as a witness for our case, I shall include you in the indictment."

White looked down uneasily at his shoes, and cowered. "Oh, sir, I don't understand you."

"Yes, you do. You understand me, and you know I mean it. Wriggling is useless; we intend to prosecute. We have unravelled this vile plot. We know the whole truth. Higginson and Lord Southminster forged a will between them—"

"Oh, sir, *not* Lord Southminster! His lordship, I'm 'are—"

Mr. Hayes's keen eye had noted the subtle shade of distinction and admission. But he said nothing openly. "Well, then, Higginson forged, and Lord Southminster accepted, a false will, which purported to be Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst's. Now, follow me clearly. That will could not have been put into the *escritoire* during Mr. Ashurst's life, for there would have been risk of his discovering it. It must, therefore, have been put there afterward. The moment he was dead, you, or somebody else with your consent and connivance, slipped it into the *escritoire*; and you afterwards showed Mr. Tillington the place where you had set it or seen it set, leading him to believe it was Mr. Ashurst's will, and so involved him in all this trouble. Note that that was a felonious act. We accuse you of felony. Do you mean to confess, and give evidence on our behalf, or will you force me to send for a policeman to arrest you?"

The cur hesitated still. "Oh, sir," drawing back, and fumbling his hands on his breast, "you don't mean it."

Mr. Hayes was prompt. "Hesslegrave, go for a policeman."

That curt sentence brought the rogue on his marrow-bones at once. He clasped his hands and debated inwardly. "If I tell you all I know," he said, at last, looking about him

with an air of abject terror, as if he thought Lord Southminster or Higginson would hear him, "will you promise not to prosecute me?" His tone became insinuating. "For a hundred pounds, I could find the real will for you. You'd better close with me. To-day is the last chance. As soon as his lordship comes in, he'll hunt it up and destroy it."

I flourished it before him, and pointed with one hand to the broken desk, which he had not yet observed in his craven agitation.

"We do not need your aid," I answered. "We have found the will, ourselves. Thanks to Lady Georgina, it is safe till this minute."

"And to me," he put in, cringing, and trying, after his kind, to curry favour with the winners at the last moment. "It's all *my* doing, my lady! I wouldn't destroy it. His lordship offered me a hundred pounds more to break open the back of the desk at night, while your ladyship was asleep, and burn the thing quietly. But I told him he might do his own dirty work if he wanted it done. It wasn't good enough while your ladyship was here in possession. Besides, I wanted the right will preserved, for I thought things might turn up so; and I wouldn't stand by and see a gentleman like Mr. Tillington, as has always behaved well to me, deprived of his inheritance."

"Which is why you conspired with Lord Southminster to rob him of it, and to send him to prison for Higginson's crime," I interposed, calmly.

"Then you confess you put the forged will there?" Mr. Hayes said, getting to business.

White looked about him helplessly. He missed his headpiece, the instigator of the plot. "Well, it was like this, my lady," he began, turning to Lady Georgina, and wriggling to gain time. "You see, his lordship and Mr. Higginson—" he twirled his thumbs and tried to invent something plausible.

Lady Georgina swooped. "No rignarole!" she said, sharply. "Do you confess you put it there or do you not—reptile?" Her vehemence startled him.

"Yes, I confess I put it there," he said at last, blinking. "As soon as the breath was out of Mr. Ashurst's body I put it there." He began to whimper. "I'm a poor man with a wife and family, sir," he went on, "though in Mr. Ashurst's time I always kept that quiet; and his lordship offered to pay me well for the job; and when you're paid well for a job yourself, sir—"

Mr. Hayes waved him off with one imperious hand. "Sit down in the corner there, man, and don't move or utter another word," he said, sternly, "until I order you. You will be in time still for me to produce at Bow Street."

Just at that moment, Lord Southminster swaggered back, accompanied by a couple of unwilling policemen. "Oh, I say," he cried, bursting in and staring around him, jubilant. "Look heah, Georgey, *are* you going quietly, or must I ask these coppahs to evict you?" He was wreathed in smiles now, and had evidently been fortifying himself with brandies and soda.

Lady Georgina rose in her wrath. "Yes, I'll go if you wish it, Bertie," she answered, with calm irony. "I'll leave the house as soon as you like—for the present—till we come back again with Harold and *his* policemen to evict you. This house is Harold's. Your game is played, boy." She spoke slowly. "We have found the other will—we have discovered Higginson's present address in Paris—and we know from White how he and you arranged this little conspiracy."

She rapped out each clause in this last accusing sentence with deliberate effect, like

to do without him. That fellah had squared it all up so neatly, don't yah know, that I thought there couldn't be any sort of hitch in the proceedings."

"You reckoned without Lois," Lady Georgina said, calmly.

"Ah, Miss Cayley—that's true. I mean, Mrs. Tillington. Yaas, yaas, I know, she's a doosid clevah person for a woman, now isn't she?"

It was impossible to take this flabby creature seriously, even as a criminal. Lady Georgina's lips relaxed. "Doosid cleves" she admitted, looking at me almost tenderly.

"But not quite so clevah, don't yah know, as Higginson!"

"There you make your blooming little erraw," Mr. Hayes burst in, adopting one of Lord Southminster's favourite witticisms—the sort of witticism that improves, like poetry, by frequent repetition. "Policemen, you may go into the next room and wait: this is a family affair; we have no immediate need of you."

"Oh, certainly," Lord Southminster echoed, much relieved. "Very propah sentiment! Most undesirable that the constables should mix themselves up in a



"WELL, THIS IS A FAIR KNOCK-OUT," HE EJACULATED.

so many pistol-shots. Each bullet hit home. The pea-green young man, drawing back and staring, stroked his shadowy moustache with feeble fingers in undisguised astonishment. Then he dropped into a chair and fixed his gaze blankly on Lady Georgina. "Well, this is a fair knock-out," he ejaculated, fatuously disconcerted. "I wish Higginson was heah. I really don't quite know what

family mattah like this. Not the place for inferriahs!"

"Then why introduce them?" Lady Georgina burst out, turning on him.

He smiled his fatuous smile. "That's just what I say," he answered. "Why the jooce introduce them? But don't snap my head off!"

The policemen withdrew respectfully, glad

to be relieved of this unpleasant business, where they could gain no credit, and might possibly involve themselves in a charge of assault. Lord Southminster rose with a benevolent grin, and looked about him pleasantly. The brandies and soda had endowed him with irrepressible cheerfulness.

"Well?" Lady Georgina murmured.

"Well, I think I'll leave now, Georgey. You've tramped my ace, yah know. Nasty trick of White to go and round on a fellow. I don't like the turn this business is taking. Seems to me, the only way I have left to get out of it is—to turn Queen's evidence."

Lady Georgina planted herself firmly against the door. "Bertie," she cried, "no, you don't—not till we've got what we want out of you!"

He gazed at her blandly. His face broke once more into an imbecile smile. "You were always a rough 'un, Georgey. Your hand did sting! Well, what do you want now? We've each played our cards, and you needn't cut up rusty over it—especially when you're winning! Hang it all, I wish I had Higginson beah to tackle you!"

"If you go to see the Treasury people, or the Solicitor-General, or the Public Prosecutor, or whoever else it may be," Lady Georgina said, stoutly, "Mr. Hayes must go with you. We've tramped your ace, as you say, and we mean to take advantage of it. And then you must trundle yourself down to Bow Street afterwards, confess the whole truth, and set Harold at liberty."

"Oh, I say now, Georgey! The whole truth! the whole blooming truth! That's really what I call humiliating a fellow!"

"If you don't, we arrest you this minute—fourteen years' imprisonment!"

"Fourteen years?" He wiped his forehead. "Oh, I say. How doosid uncomfortable. I was nevah much good at doing anything by the sweat of my brow. I ought to have lived in the Garden of Eden. Georgey, you're hard on a chap when he's down on his luck. It would be confounded cruel to send me to fourteen years at Portland."

"You would have sent my husband to it," I broke in, angrily, confronting him.

"What? You too, Miss Cayley?—I mean Mrs. Tillington. Don't look at me like that. Tigahs aren't in it."

His jauntness disarmed us. However wicked he might be, one felt it would be ridiculous to imprison this schoolboy. A sound flogging and a month's deprivation

of wine and cigarettes was the obvious punishment designed for him by nature.

"You must go down to the police-court and confess this whole conspiracy," Lady Georgina went on after a pause, as sternly as she was able. "I prefer, if we can, to save the family—even you, Bertie. But I can't any longer save the family honour—I can only save Harold's. You must help me to do that; and then, you must give me your solemn promise—in writing—to leave England for ever, and go to live in South Africa."

He stroked the invisible moustache more nervously than before. That penalty came home to him. "What, leave England for evah? Newmarket—Ascot—the club—the music-halls!"

"Or fourteen years' imprisonment!"

"Georgey, you spank as hard as evah!"

"Decide at once, or we arrest you!"

He glanced about him feebly. I could see he was longing for his lost confederate. "Well, I'll go," he said at last, sobering down; "and your sollicitaw can trot round with me. I'll do all that you wish, though I call it most unfriendly. Hang it all, fourteen years would be so beastly unpleasant!"

We drove forthwith to the proper authorities, who, on hearing the facts, at once arranged to accept Lord Southminster and White as Queen's evidence, neither being the actual forger. We also telegraphed to Paris to have Higginson arrested, Lord Southminster giving as up his assumed name with the utmost cheerfulness, and without one moment's compunction. Mr. Hayes was quite right: each conspirator was only too ready to save himself by betraying his fellows. Then we drove on to Bow Street (Lord Southminster consoling himself with a cigarette on the way), just in time for Harold's case, which was to be taken, by special arrangement, at 3.30.

A very few minutes sufficed to turn the tables completely on the conspirators. Harold was discharged, and a warrant was issued for the arrest of Higginson, the actual forger. He had drawn up the false will and signed it with Mr. Ashurst's name, after which he had presented it for Lord Southminster's approval. The pea-green young man told his tale with engaging frankness. "Bertie's a simple Simon," Lady Georgina commented to me; "but he's also a rogue; and Higginson saw his way to make excellent capital of him in both capacities—first use him as a cat-paw, and then blackmail him."

On the steps of the police-court, as we emerged triumphant, Lord Southminster met us—still radiant as ever. He seemed wholly unaware of the depths of his iniquity: a fresh dose of brandy had restored his composure. "Look heah," he said, "Harold, your wife

tin and been a countess as well, aftah the governah's dead and gone, don't yah see. You'd have landed the double event. So you'd have pulled off a bettah thing for yourself in the end, as I said, if you'd laid your bottom dollah on me for winnah!"



"HAROLD, YOUR WIFE HAS BESTED ME."

has bested me! Jolly good thing for you that you managed to get hold of such a clevah woman! If you hadn't, deah boy, you'd have found yourself in Queeah Street! But, I say, Lois—I call yah Lois because you're my cousin now, yah know—you were backing the wrong man aftah all, as I told yah. For if you'd backed me, all this wouldn't have come out; you'd have gut the

Higginson is now doing fourteen years at Portland; Harold and I are happy in the sweetest place in Gloucestershire; and Lord Southminster, blissfully unaware of the contempt with which the rest of the world regards him, is shooting big game among his "boys" in South Africa. Indeed, he bears so little malice that he sent us a present of a trophy of horns for our hall last winter.

A Town in the Tree-Tops.

BY ELLSWORTH DOUGLASS.



EVERYBODY at the *pension* had heard it, but Bayly has a circumstantial and picturesque manner of narration, which gives old stories a new interest.

"Wasn't it your American millionaire, Mr. Waldorf Astor," he said, addressing me, "who made a wager that he would comfortably seat thirty-two guests around the stump of a California big tree? And didn't he do it? Brought a slice off the tree-stump more than 6,000 miles, and had a grand dinner on it in London?"

"I must say I like your big tree stories better than your big tree wines," put in Gaillet, a dashing young Frenchman, who spoke English fluently; "but I don't think all that is so wonderful. I can show you a place, within less than an hour of Paris, where more than thirty-two persons can dine around comfortable tables high up in the branches of a single tree!"

"That sounds interesting, Gaillet; to me it smells like 'good copy.' Eating up in trees might make some novel photographs; what do you say, Bayly?"

I purposely touched the young Englishman

on his hobby. He was an amateur photographer of the virulent and persistent type, and had recently infected me with the contagion.

"If the sun looks promising we will ride down there on our wheels to-morrow and have a look at them," he replied. "Can you go with us and show us the way, Gaillet?"

And so, early the next morning, we went. It was a delightful two hours on the wheel in early October. Just as the country began to grow more broken and interesting, and chestnut trees began to strew the paths with prickly burrs, we wheeled up a slight hill into a quaint village, and dismounting, Gaillet exclaimed:—

"Here we are at home with Robinson Crusoe!"

Had he told me that Robinson Crusoe really lived in the flesh and, after returning from his lonely adventures, founded this little village, and here attempted to bring into fashion his old habit of eating in the trees, I would have believed it. For here is the village bearing his name to this day; here also, as seen in our first photograph, is his effigy in the principal street, under his rough, thatched umbrella, and with his parrot seated



From a Photo by

THE VILLAGE OF ROBINSON.

[A. Bayly

upon his shoulder, as every schoolboy knows him. Here, likewise, are a number of great trees, with two or three rustic dining-huts built far up on the limbs of each; and, as Gaillet assured us, here, for the last fifty years, men and their families have eaten in the trees like squirrels.

As Bayly prepared to take the first photograph, he noticed that the highest dining-stage in the tip-top of the biggest tree had curtains drawn around it, which he asked to have pulled back. A waiter informed him that this rustic hut was engaged by a party.

"Yes, I telephoned down yesterday afternoon, and reserved it for us," put in Gaillet. "I also ordered the *déjeuner*. I hope you will like it: *sole au gratin* and *chateaubriand aux champignons*."

At that moment the wind left the leaves and boughs at rest, and Bayly snapped the shutter, regardless of the curtains. I made reply to Gaillet:—

"I never heard of Crusoe's fire being quite so pretentious as all that. He must have learned cookery since he came to France."

"It is M. Guesquin *ahé* who claims the credit for applying the tree idea to modern dining. Doubtless he does it better than Crusoe could have done. At any rate, he has made a large fortune out of the idea—far more than Defoe made out of his story. It was just fifty years ago," continued Gaillet, "that the father of the present proprietor here was struck with the clever idea, bought this picturesque plot of ground with large trees on it, and built rustic dining-rooms on the strongest branches. He called his lonely little country place Robinson, after the Swiss

family which figures in the French version of the romance, and invited the patronage of the fun-loving Parisians who delight in fanciful ideas of this sort. At that time it was a long coach ride from the city, but it soon became the popular *rendezvous* for a day's outing. Since then Kings have dined here; thousands of wedding parties have seen life rosy from the tree-tops, and nearly every Parisian boy who reads the story of Robinson's adventures is taken to this quaint little village as a realistic sequel. M. Guesquin's success tempted others into

similar ventures here, so that now nearly every large tree is utilized, and Robinson has grown into quite a respectable village, whose name will always be associated in the French mind with breezy dinners, family picnics, donkey-riding, bracing country air, and charming scenery. The *Ligne de Sceaux* long ago built a branch line terminating here, and a journey of forty minutes by train brings one down from the Luxembourg Station in Paris."

Bayly evidently cared little for these facts, for he had busied himself getting a focus



From a Photo by

THE LARGEST ROBINSON TREE.

(L. Bayly)

on the largest tree, which M. Guesquin proudly advertises as "*Le Vrai Arbre de Robinson*." You may see the result in the accompanying photograph. Its massive trunk has not much increased in size since the stairway was built around it half a century ago. There is one thatched hut built at the first branch of the tree; another well out on a higher limb on the other side of the trunk; and the third and most desirable in the very tip-top, from which one sees an enchanting view of all the pretty country lying towards



(Photo Photo by)

LARGE DINING-ROOM BETWEEN TWO TREES.

(Allworth Langdon)

Paris. A stairway connects all these rustic huts with each other, and in the busy season a waiter is stationed at each dining stage, and the wines and cooked foods are hauled up to him from the ground by means of a rope and basket running to each stage, as will be seen in most of the photographs. At wedding parties these same baskets have more than once served to lower away some bibulous guest whose frequent toasts to the bride have ended in a decided disinclination to attempt the giddy and precipitous stairway.

I lay went next to inspect a larger and more modern dining-room built between two young trees, and I have caught him on the stairway in the photograph above. But I was anxious to climb to some height and get a good view of the nest in the tree-top where we were to breakfast. I heard someone laughing at my first futile attempts at climbing, but at last I gained a point of vantage which gave a view over the tops of the trees to the indefinite stretch of pretty valley beyond.

While breakfast was preparing we visited the neighbouring inns to photograph the trees. Just across the road we found one which claims the distinction of being the tallest in Robinson. As will be seen in the photograph, it has three dining stages one directly above another, so that

the same basket may serve them all. A waiter can be seen in the top stage of this thrifty, sturdy chestnut, in which many generations may yet dine.

Farther down the road is a place called the *Maison Robin*, possibly in the hope that the kind public will believe that the "true Robinson" was this Robin's son. Here is the "Great Chestnut," which truly looks as if it might antedate Robinson

Crusoe by centuries. Yet it still showers its plenteous fruit upon the ground, and as we kicked about its bushels of bursting hurs we wondered how "marron glacé" could be so expensive in Paris. The next photograph shows how the walks were sprinkled with



(Photo Photo by)

A THREE-STORY TREE.

(A. Langdon)



From a Photo by

THE GREAT QUESTIVE.

(Blissworth Douglas)

ripe nuts; and also some pretty samples of the vine or ivy-covered *bosquets* for those who prefer to dine on *terra firma*. These are numerous, and charmingly pretty in the gardens of most of the inns here.

Another great feature of Robinson is the family picnic, but the French love ease and comfort too much to dine on the grass under the trees. They prefer to sit properly at a table, and many of the inns recognise the right of visitors to bring their own provisions, and are content with serving them wines, coffee, and the like. When you go to Robinson, you are sure to recognise this place at the turning of the road before reaching the great trees.

I returned to our second stage with Gaillet, and found the table laid, but not a scrap of food to be seen. The waiter was trotting up the stairs with a heavily-loaded tray, on which was an enormous plate of *sole au gratin*. Gaillet remarked that it looked as if the people in the top hut had not only captured our place, but our breakfast as well. He begged the waiter to hurry our order, and then asked me what I thought might be going on up there behind the curtains. It was very near us, and perhaps for this reason the young ladies refrained from audible conversation. They only whispered among themselves and laughed at in-

tervals, but Gaillet thought he surprised one or two attempts to peep around the curtain at us. I was ravenously hungry, and when the waiter next went past up to the top story I seized a yard of bread from his tray. Looking down at Hayly, who was focusing below, I cried out: "Lancelot, if you are hungry, get a photograph of the only morsel of food I have been able to secure before I devour it!" And our

last illustration bears witness that he did so. This detailed view of a thatched, rustic hut perched upon a big limb finished his work.



FROM PHOTO BY SHAN VIEW OF A HUT ON A BRANCH.

(L. B. Duff)

Aunt Sarah's Brooch.

BY ARTHUR MORRISON



AM afraid to face my Aunt Sarah. Though how I am to get out of it I don't quite see.

At any rate, I will never again undertake the work of a private detective; though that

would have been a more useful resolve a fortnight ago. The mischief is done now.

The main bitterness lies in the reflection that it is all Aunt Sarah's fault. Such a muddlesome old—but, there, losing my temper won't mend it. A few weeks ago I was Clement Simpson, with very considerable expectations from my Aunt Sarah and no particular troubles on my mind, and I was engaged to my cousin, Honoria Prescott. Now I am still Clement Simpson (although sometimes I almost doubt even that), but my expectations from my Aunt Sarah are of the most uncomfortable, and my troubles overwhelm me. As for Honoria Prescott—but read and learn it all.

My aunt is a maiden lady of sixty-five, though there is something about her appearance at variance with the popular notion of a spinster, inasmuch that it is the way of tradesmen to speak of her as "Mrs." Simpson, and to send their little bills thus addressed. She is a very positive old lady, and she measures, I should judge, about five feet round the waist. She is constantly attended by a doctor, and from time to time, in her sadder moments, it has been her habit to assure me that she shall not live long, and that very soon I shall find myself well provided

for; though for an invalid she always ate rather well: about as much, I should judge, as a fairly healthy navy. She had a great idea of her importance in the family—in fact, she *was* important—and she had—has now, indeed—a way of directing the movements of all its members, who submit with a becoming humility. It is well to submit humbly to the caprice of a rich elderly aunt, and it has always been my own practice. It was because of Aunt Sarah's autocratic reign in the family that Honoria Prescott and I refrained from telling her of our engagement; for Aunt Sarah had conceived vast matrimonial ambitions on behalf of each of us. We were each to make an exceedingly good marriage; there was even a suggestion of a title for Honoria, though what title, and how it was to be captured, I never heard. And for me, I understood there would be nothing less than a brewer's daughter, or even a company-promoter's. And so we feared that Aunt Sarah might look upon a union between us not only as a flat defiance of her wishes, but as a deplorable *ménage à trois* on both sides. So, for the time the engagement lasted (not very long, alas!), we feared to reveal it. Now there is no engagement to reveal. But this is anticipating.

Aunt Sarah was very fussy about her jewels. In perpetual apprehension lest they might be stolen, she carried them with her whenever she took a change of air (and she had a good many such changes), while in her own house she kept them in some profoundly secret

hiding-place. I have an idea that it was under a removable board in the floor of her bedroom. Of course, we all professed to share Aunt Sarah's solicitude, and it had been customary in the family, from times beyond

initials appeared on the frame of the brooch behind—"J." on one side and "S." on the other. It was, on the whole, perhaps, the ugliest and clumsiest of all Aunt Sarah's jewels, and I never saw anything else like it



"A SECRET HIDING-PLACE."

my knowledge, to greet her first with inquiries as to her own health, and next with hopes for the safety of the jewels. But, as a matter of fact, they were not vastly valuable things; probably they were worth more than the case they were kept in, but not very much. Aunt Sarah never wore them—even she would not go as far as that. They were nothing but a small heap of clumsy old brooches, ear-rings, and buckles, with one or two very long, thin watch-chains, and certain mourning and signet rings belonging to departed members of the family who had flourished (or not) in the early part of the century. There were no big diamonds among them—scarcely any diamonds at all, in fact; but the garnets and cats' eyes strove to make good in size and ugliness of setting what they lacked in mere market worth. Chief of all the "jewels," and most precious of Aunt Sarah's possessions, was a big amethyst brooch, with a pane of glass let in behind, inclosing a lock of the reddest hair I have ever seen. It was the hair of Aunt Sarah's own uncle Joseph, the most distinguished member of the family, who had written three five-act tragedies, and dedicated them all, one after another, to George the Fourth. Joseph's

anywhere, except one; and that, singularly enough, was an exact duplicate—barring, of course, the hair and the inscription—in a very mouldy shop in Soho, where all sorts of hopelessly out-of-date rings and brooches and chains hung for sale. It was the way of the shopkeeper to ticket these gloomy odds and ends with cheerful inscriptions, such as "Antique, 17s. 6d.," "Real Gold, £1 5s.," "Quaint, £2 2s. 6d." But even he could find no more promising adjective for the hideous brooch than "massive"—which was quite true. He wanted £3 for the thing when I first saw it, and it slowly declined, by half-a-crown at a time, to £1 15s., and then it vanished altogether. I wondered at the time what misguided person could have bought it; but I learnt afterward that the shopkeeper had lost heart, and used the window space for something else.

Aunt Sarah had been for six weeks at a "Hydropathic Establishment" at Malvern. On the day fixed for her return, I left a very agreeable tennis party for the purpose of meeting her at the station, as was dutiful and proper. First I called at her house, to learn the exact time at which the train was expected at Paddington. It was rather sooner than I

had supposed, so I hurried to find a cab, and urged the driver to drive his best. I am never lucky with cabs, however—not, I begin to think, with anything else—and the horse, with all the cabman's efforts, never got beyond a sort of tumultuous shambling; and so I missed Aunt Sarah at Paddington. It was very annoying, and I feared she might take it ill, because she never made allowances for anybody's misfortunes but her own. However, I turned about and cabbied it back as fast as I could. She had been home nearly half an hour when I arrived, and was drinking her third or fourth cup of tea. She was not ill-tempered, on the whole, and she received my explanations with a fairly good grace. She had been a little better, she

herself stowed the case at the bottom of her biggest and strongest trunk, which was now upstairs, partly unpacked. My question reminded her, and she rose at once, to transfer her valuables to their permanent hiding-place.

I heard Aunt Sarah going upstairs with a groan at every step, each groan answered by a loud creak from the woodwork. Then for awhile there was silence, and I walked to the French window to look out on the lawn and the carriage-drive. But as I looked, suddenly there came a dismal yell from above, followed by many shrieks.

We—myself and the servants—found Aunt Sarah seated on a miscellaneous heap of clothes by the side of her big trunk, a picture



"SHE RECEIVED MY EXPLANATIONS WITH A FAIRLY GOOD GRACE."

thought, during her stay at Malvern, but feared that her health could make no permanent improvement. And indeed there seemed very little room for improvement in Aunt Sarah's bodily condition, and no more room at all in her clothes. Then, in the regular manner, I inquired as to the well-being of the jewels.

The jewels, it seemed, were all right. Aunt Sarah had seen to that. She had

of calamity. "Gone!" she ejaculated. "Stolen! All my jewels! Stop thief! Catch 'em! My jewel-case!"

There was no doubt about it, it seemed. The case had been at the bottom of the big trunk—Aunt Sarah had put it there herself—and now it was gone. The trunk had been locked and tightly corded at Malvern, and it had been opened by Aunt Sarah's maid as soon as it had been set down where it now

stood. But now the jewel-case was gone, and Aunt Sarah made such a disturbance as might be expected from the Constable of the Tower if he suddenly learned that the Crown of England was gone missing.

"Clement!" said my aunt, when she rose to her feet, after sending for the police; "go, Clement, and find my jewels. I rely on your sagacity. The police are always such fools. But you—you I can depend upon. Bring the jewels back, my dear, and you will never regret it, I promise you. At least bring back the brooch—the brooch with Uncle Joseph's hair and initials. That I *must* have, Clement!" And here Aunt Sarah grew quite impressive—almost noble. "Clement, I rely entirely on you. I forbid you to come into my presence again without that brooch! Find it, and you will be rewarded to the utmost of my power!"

Nevertheless, as I have said, Aunt Sarah took care to call in the police.

Now what was I to do? Of course, I must make an effort to satisfy Aunt Sarah; but how? The thing was absurd enough, and personally, I was in little grief at the loss, but Aunt Sarah must be propitiated at any cost. I was to go and find the jewels, or at least the brooch, and the whole world was before me wherein to search. I was confused, not to say dazed. I stood on the pavement outside Aunt Sarah's gate, and I tried to remember what the detectives I had read of did in such circumstances as these.

What they did, of course, was to find a clue—*instantly* and upon the spot. I stared blankly up and down the street—it was a quiet road in Belzize Park—but I

could see nothing that looked like a clue. Perhaps the commonest sort of clue was footprints. But the weather was fine and dry, and the clean, hard pavement was without a mark of any kind. Besides, I had a feeling that footprints as a clue were a little threadbare and out of date; they were so obvious—so "otiose" as I have heard it called. No respectable novelist would depend on footprints alone, nowadays. Then there was a piece of the thief's coat, torn off by a sharp railing, or by a broken bottle on top of a wall; and there was also a lost button. I remembered that many excellent detective stories had been brought to breathless and triumphant terminations by the aid

of one or other of these clues. I looked carefully along the line of broken glass that defended the top of Aunt Sarah's outer wall, but not a rag, not a shred, fluttered there. I tried to remember something else, and as I gazed thoughtfully downward, my eye was attracted by some small black object lying on the pavement by the gate. I stooped—and behold, it *was* a button! A trouser button, by all that's lucky!

I snatched it eagerly, and read the name stamped thereon, "J. Pullinger, London." I knew the name—indeed it was the name of my own tailor. The scent would seem to be growing stronger.

But at that moment I grew conscious of an uneasy subsidence of my right trouser-leg. Hastily clapping my hand under my waistcoat, I found a loose brace-strap, and then realized that I had merely picked up my own button. I went home.

I spent the evening in fruitless brain-



"BEHOLD, IT WAS A BUTTON."

cutdgetting. My brightest idea (which came about midnight) was to go back to Aunt Sarah's the first thing in the morning. True, she had forbidden me to come into her presence without that brooch, but that, I felt, must be regarded rather as a burst of rhetoric than as a serious prohibition. Besides, the case might have been stolen by one of her own servants; and, moreover, if I wanted a clue, clearly I must begin my search at the very spot where the theft had been committed. She couldn't object to *that*, anyhow.

So in the morning I went. Aunt Sarah seemed to have forgotten her order that I must not approach her without the brooch, but she seemed hurt to find I had not brought it. She had had no sleep all night, she said. She thought I ought to have discovered the thieves before she went to bed; but at any rate, she expected I would do it to-day. I said I would certainly do my best, and I fear I found it necessary to invent a somewhat exciting story of my adventures of the previous evening in search of the brooch.

There was a plain-clothes constable, it seemed, still about the place, and the police had searched all the servants' boxes, without discovering anything. Their theory, it seemed, was that some thief must have secreted himself about the garden, entered by a French window soon after Aunt Sarah's arrival, made his way to the bedroom—which would be easy, for there were two staircases—and then made off with the case; and, indeed, Aunt Sarah declared that the clothes in the box were much disturbed when she discovered her loss. The police spoke mysteriously about "a clue," but would not say what it was—which, no doubt, would be unprofessional.

All the servants had been closely questioned, and the detective now in the place wished to ask me if I had observed anything unusual. I hadn't, and I told him so. Had I noticed whether any of the French windows were open when I called the first time? No, I hadn't noticed. I didn't happen to have called more than once before my aunt had come in? No, I didn't. Which way had I entered the house when I came back after my aunt's arrival? By the front door, in the usual way. Was the front door open? Yes, I remembered that it was—probably left open by forgetfulness of the servants after the luggage had been brought in; so that I had come in without knocking or ringing. And he asked other questions which I have forgotten. I did not feel

hopeful of his success, although he seemed so very sagacious; he spoke with an air of already knowing all about it, but I doubted. All my experience of newspaper reports told me that when the police spoke mysteriously of "a clue," that case might as well be given up at once, to save trouble. That seemed also to be Aunt Sarah's opinion. Before I left she confided to me that she didn't believe in the police a bit; she was sure that they were only staring about and asking questions to make a show of doing something, and that it would end in no result after all. All the more, she said, must she rely on me. The punishment of the thief was altogether a secondary matter; what she wanted were the jewels—or, as a minimum, the brooch with Uncle Joseph's hair in it. She would be glad if I would report progress to her during my search, but whether I did so or not, she must insist on my recovering the property. I was a grown man now, she pointed out, and, with my intelligence, ought to be easily equal to such a small thing; certainly more so than mere ordinary ignorant policemen. Of those she gave up all hope. She would not mind if I took a day or two over it, but she would prefer me to find the brooch at once.

I felt a little desperate when I left Aunt Sarah. I *must* do something. She had made up her mind that I was to recover the trinkets, or at least the brooch, and if I failed her she would cut me off, I knew. There was a fellow called Finch, secretary to the Society for the Dissemination of Moral Literature among the Esquimaux, who had been very friendly with her of late, and although I had no especial grudge against the Esquimaux as a nation, I had a strong objection to seeing Aunt Sarah's fortune go to provide them with moral literature, or Mr. Finch with his salary—the latter being, I had heard, the main object of the society. I spent the day in fruitless cogitation and blank staring into pawnshop windows, in the remote hope of seeing Aunt Sarah's brooch exposed for sale. And on the following morning I went back to Aunt Sarah.

I confess I had a tale prepared to account for my time—a tale, perhaps, not strictly true in all its details. But what was I to do to satisfy such a terrible old lady? I must say I think it was a very interesting sort of tale, with plenty of thieves' kitchens and receivers' dens in it, and, on the whole, it went down very well, although I could see that Aunt Sarah's good opinion of me was in danger for lack of tangible result to my

adventures. The police, she said, had given the case up altogether and gone away. They reported, finally, that there was no clue, and that they could do nothing. I came away, feeling a good deal of sympathy with the police.

And then the wicked thought came—the wicked thought that has caused all the trouble. Plainly, the jewels were gone irrecoverably—did not the police admit it? Aunt Sarah would never see them again, and I should be cut out of her will—unless I brought her, at least, that hideous old brooch. The brooch by this time was probably in the melting-pot; but—there was, or had been, an

at last I went and looked in at the window of the shop in Soho.

Was the brooch sold or not? It was not in the window, and I tried to persuade myself that it must be gone. I hung about for some little while, but at last I took the first step in the path of deception. I went into the shop.

Once there, I was in for it, and nothing but the absence of the brooch could have saved me. But the brooch was there, in all its dusty hideousness, in a box, among scores of others. I turned it over and over; there was no doubt about it—barring the hair and the initials, it was as exact a duplicate as was

ever made. The man asked two pounds ten for it, and I was in such a state of agitation that I paid the money at once, feeling unequal to the further agony of beating him down to the price he had last offered it at in his window.

I slipped it into my trouser pocket and sneaked guiltily down the street. There was no going back for me now—fate was too strong. I went home and locked myself in my room. There I spent an hour and a half in marking the exact position and size of the necessary initials. When all

was set out satisfactorily, I went back to Soho again to find an engraver.

I might have gone to the shop where I had bought the brooch, but I fancied that might let the shopkeeper some little way into my secret. I walked till I came to just such another shop, and then, feeling, as I imagined, like an inexperienced shoplifter on a difficult job, I went in and gave my instructions. I offered to pay extra if the work could be done at once, and under my inspection. The engraver eyed me rather curiously, I fancied, but he was quite ready to earn his money, and in a quarter of an hour I was sneaking along the street again with the fraudulent brooch, one



"THE FIRST STEP IN THE PATH OF DECEPTION."

because of its exact similarity in shade to that in Aunt Sarah's brooch. No doubt the girl would gladly sell a small piece of it for a few shillings. Then the initials for the brooch-back would be easy enough. They were just the plain italic capitals *J* and *S*, one at each side, and I was confident that, with the brooch before me, I could trace their precise shape and size for the guidance of an engraver. And Aunt Sarah would never for a moment suppose that there could be another brooch in the world at all like her most precious "jewel." The longer I thought over the scheme the easier it seemed, and the greater the temptation grew. Till

step nearer completion. The letters, to my eye at least, were as exactly cut as if copied from the original. They were a bit too bright and new, of course, but that I would remedy at home, and I did. A little fine emery on the point of my thumb, properly persevered with, took off all the raw edges and the newness of appearance, and a trifle of greasy black from a candle-wick, well wiped into the incisions and almost all wiped out again, left the initials apparently fifty years old at least.

Next morning's interview with Aunt Sarah was one of veiled triumph. I was on the track of the jewels at last, I said—or at any rate, of the brooch. I might have to sacrifice the rest, I explained, for the sake of getting that. Indeed, I was pretty sure that I could only get at the brooch. I could say no more, just then, but I hinted that nothing must be said to a soul, as my proceedings might possibly be considered, in the eye of the law, something too near compounding a felony. But I would risk that, I assured Aunt Sarah, and more, in her behalf. She was mightily pleased, and said I was the only member of the family worth his salt. I began to think the Esquimaux stood a chance of going short of moral literature, if Mr. Finch were depending much on Aunt Sarah's will.

The rest seemed very easy, but in reality it wasn't. I set out briskly enough for the eating-house, but as I neared it my steps grew slower and slower. It seemed an easy thing, at a distance, to ask for a lock of the red-headed girl's hair, but as I came nearer the shop, and began to consider what I should say, the job seemed a bit awkward. She was a thick-set sort of girl, with very red arms and a snub nose, and I felt doubtful how she would take the request. Perhaps she would laugh, and dab me in the face with a wet lettuce, as I had once seen her do with a jocular customer. Now, I am a little particular about my appearance and bearing, and I was not anxious to be dabbed in the face with a wet lettuce by a red-haired waitress at a cheap eating-house. If I had known anybody else with hair of that extraordinary colour I would not have taken the risk; but I didn't. Nevertheless I hesitated, and walked up and down a little before entering.

There was no customer in the place, for it was at least an hour before mid-day. The girl issued from a recess at the back, and came toward me. She seemed a terrible—a most formidable girl, seen so closely. She had

small, sharp eyes, a snub nose, and a very large mouth—the sort of mouth that is ever ready to pour forth shrill abuse or vulgar derision. My heart sank into my boots. I couldn't—no, I *couldn't* ask her straightaway for a lock of her hair.

I temporized. I said I would have something to eat. She asked what. I said I would take anything there was. After a while she brought a plate of hideous coarse cold beef—like cat's meat. This is a sort of food I *cannot* eat, but I had to try. And she brought pickles on a plate—horrid, messy yellow pickles. I had often wondered as I passed what gave that eating-house its unpleasant smell, and now I knew it was the pickles.

I cut the offensive stuff into small pieces, made as much show of eating it as I could, and shoved it into a heap at one side of the plate. The girl had retired to a partly inclosed den at the back of the shop, where she seemed to be washing plates. After all, I reflected, there was nothing to be afraid of. It was a purely commercial transaction, and no doubt the girl would be very glad to sell a little of her hair. Moreover, the longer I waited the greater risk I ran of having other customers come in and spoil the thing altogether. There was the hair—the one thing to straighten all my difficulties, and a few shillings would certainly buy all I wanted. I rapped on the table with my fork.

The red-haired girl came down the shop wiping her hands on her apron—big hands, and very red; terrible hands to box an ear or claw a face. This thought disturbed me, but I said, manfully, "I should like, if you've no objection, to have—I should like—I should like a—"

It was useless. I *couldn't* say "a lock of your hair." I stammered, and the girl stared doubtfully. "Cawfy?" she suggested.

"Yes, yes," I answered, eagerly, with a breath of relief. "Coffee, of course."

The coffee was as bad as the beef. It came in a vast, thick mug, like a gallipot with a handle. It ought to have been very strong coffee, considering its thickness, but it had a flat, rather metallic taste, and a general flavour of boiled crusts.

I became convinced that the real reason of my hesitation was the fact that I had not settled how much to offer for the hair. It might look suspicious, I reflected, to offer too much, but, on the other hand, it would never do to offer too little. What was the golden mean? As I considered, a grubby,

shameless boy put his head in at the door, and shouted, "Wayo, carrots! What price yer wig?"

The red-haired girl made a savage rush, and the boy danced off across the street with gestures of derision. Plainly, I couldn't make an offer at all after that. She would take it as a deliberate insult—suggested by the shout of the dirty boy. Perhaps she would make just such a savage rush at me—and what should I do then? Here the matter

of reaching for a paper, or a mustard-pot, or the like. But that was useless. I never knew which way she would move next, and I saw no opportunity of effecting my purpose without the risk of driving the points of my scissors into her head. Indeed, if I had seen the chance, I should scarce have had the courage to snip. And once, when she turned suddenly, she looked a trifle suspicious.

I attempted to engage her in conversa-



"SHE LOOKED A TRIFLE SUSPICIOUS."

was settled for the present by the entrance of two coal-heavers.

For three days in succession I went to that awful eating-house, and each day I ate, or pretended to eat, just such an awful meal. I shirked the beef, but I was confronted with equally fearful bloaters—bloaters that smelt right across the street. It occurred to me, so criminal and so desperate had I grown, that I might *steal* enough of the girl's hair for my purpose, by the aid of a pair of pocket scissors, and so escape all difficulty. With that design I followed her quietly down the shop once or twice, making a pretence

tion, in order that I might, by easy and natural stages, approach the subject of her hair. It was not easy. She disliked hair as a subject of conversation. I began to suspect, and more than suspect, that her hair was the stock joke of the regular customers. Not a boy could pass the door singing "Her golden hair was hanging down her back" (as most of them did), but she bridled and glared. Truly, it was very awkward. But then, there was no other such hair, so far as my observation had gone, in all London, or anywhere else.

Some men have the easiest way imaginable

of dropping into familiar speech with barmaids and waitresses at a moment's notice, or less. I had never cultivated the art, and now I was sorry for my neglect. Still, I might try, and I did. But somehow it was difficult to hit the right note. My key varied. A patronizingly uttered "My dear," seemed a good general standby to begin or finish a sentence; so I said: "Ah—Hannah—Hannah, my dear!"

The words startled me when I heard them. I feared my tone had scarcely the correct dignity. Hannah's red head turned, and she came across, grinning sily. "Yus?" she said, interrogatively, and still grinning.

I feared I had begun wrong. It was all very well to be condescendingly familiar with a waitress, but it would never do to allow the waitress to be familiar with me. So I said, rather severely, "Just give me a newspaper. Ah—Hannah!"

I think I hit the medium very well with the last two words. "Yus?" she said again, and now she positively leered.

"I—I meant to have given you sixpence yesterday; you're very attentive, Hannah—Hannah, my dear." (That didn't sound quite right, somehow—never mind.) "Very attentive. Here's the sixpence. Er—er"—(what in the world should I say next?) "What—er—what" (I was desperate) "what is the latest fashion in hair?"

"Not *yus* colour ain't," she said; "so now!" And she swung off with a toss of her red head.

I had offended her! I ought to have guessed she would take that question amiss—I was a fool. And before I could apologize a customer came in—a waggoner. I had lost another day! And Aunt Sarah was growing more and more impatient.

At last I resolved to go at the business point-blank, as I should have done at first. Plainly it was my only chance. The longer I made my approach, the more awkward I got. I had the happy thought to take a flower in my button-hole, and give it to Hannah as a peace-offering, after my unintentional rudeness of yesterday. It acted admirably, and I was glad to see a girl in her humble position so much gratified by a little attention like that. She grinned—she even blushed a little—all the while I ate that repulsive early lunch. So I seized the opportunity of her good humour, paid for the food as soon as I could, and said, with as much business-like ease as I could assume:—

"I—ah—I should like, Hannah, ah—if

you don't mind—just as a—a matter of—of scientific interest, you know—scientific interest, my dear—to buy a small piece of your hair."

"'Oo ye gettin' at?" she replied, with a blush and a giggle.

"I—I'm perfectly serious," I said—and I believe I looked desperately so. "I'll give you half a sovereign for a small piece—just a lock—for purely scientific purposes, I assure you."

She giggled again, more than ever, and ogled in a way that sent cold shivers all over me. It struck me now, with a twinge of horror, that perhaps she supposed I had conceived an attachment for her, and wanted the hair as a keepsake. That would be terrible to think of. I swore inwardly that I would never come near that street again, if only I got out safely with the hair this time.

She went over into her lair, where the dirty plates were put, and presently returned with the object of my desires—a thick lump of hair rolled up in a piece of newspaper. I thrust the half-sovereign towards her, grabbed the parcel, and ran. I feared she might expect me to kiss her.

Now I had to employ another Soho jeweller, but by this time, after the red-headed waitress, no jeweller could daunt me. The pane of glass had to be lifted from the back of the brooch, the brown hair that was in it removed, and a proper quantity of the red hair substituted; and the work would be completed by the refixing of the glass and the careful smoothing down of the gold rim about it. I found a third dirty jeweller's shop, and waited while the jeweller did it all.

And now that the thing was completed, I lost no time on the way to Aunt Sarah's. I went by omnibus, and alighted a couple of streets from her house. It astonishes me, now, to think that I could have been so calm. I had never had a habit of deception, but now I had slid into it by such an easy process, and it had worked so admirably for a week or more, that it seemed quite natural and regular.

I turned the last corner, and was scarce a dozen yards from Aunt Sarah's gate, when I was tapped on the shoulder. I turned, and saw the detective who had questioned me, and everybody else, just after the robbery.

"Good morning, Mr. Simpson," he said. "Mr. *Clement* Simpson, I believe?"

"Yes," I said.

"Just so. Sorry to trouble you, Mr. Simpson, but I must get you to come along o' me on a small matter o' business. You needn't say anything, of course; but if you do I shall have to make a note of it, and it may be used as evidence."

What was this? I gasped, and the whole street seemed to turn round and round and over and over. Arrested! What for?

Whether I asked the question or only moved my lips silently, I don't know, but the man answered—and his voice seemed to come from a distance out of the chaos about me.

"Well, it's about that jewel-case of your aunt's, of course. Sorry to upset you, and no doubt it'll be all right, but just for the present you must come to the station with me. I won't hold you if you promise not to try any games. Or you can have a cab, if you like."

"But," I said, "but it's all a mistake—an awful mistake! It's—it's out of the question! Come and see my aunt, and she'll tell you! Pray let me see my aunt!"

"Don't mind obliging a gentleman if I can, and if you want to speak to your aunt you may, secin' it's close by, and it ain't a warrant case. But I shall have to be with you, and you'll have to come with me after, whatever she says."

I was in an awful position, and I realized it fully. Here I was with that facsimile brooch in my possession, and if it were found on me at the police-station, of course, it would be taken for the genuine article, and regarded as a positive proof that I was the thief. In the few steps to Aunt Sarah's house I saw and understood now what the police had been at. I was the person they had suspected from the beginning. Their pretence of dropping

the inquiry was a mere device to throw me off my ground and lead me to betray myself by my movements. And I had been watched frequenting shady second-hand jewellery shops in Soho! And, no doubt I had been

seen in the low eating-house where I might be supposed to be leaving messages for criminal associates! It was hideous. On the one side there was the chance of ruin and imprisonment for theft, and on the other the scarcely less terrible one of estranging Aunt Sarah for ever by confessing my miserable deception. Plainly I had only one way of safety—to brazen out my story of the recovery of the brooch. I was bitterly sorry, now, that I had coloured the story, so far as it had gone, quite so boldly. It had gone a good way, too, for I had been obliged to add something to it each time I saw Aunt Sarah during

my operations. But I must lie through stone walls now.

I scarcely remember what Aunt Sarah said when she was told I was under arrest for the robbery. I know she broke a drawing-room chair, and had to be dragged off the floor on to the sofa by the detective and myself. But she got her speech pretty soon, and protested valiantly. It was a shameful outrage, she proclaimed, and the police were incapable fools. "While you've been doing nothing," she said, "my dear nephew has traced out the jewels and—and—"

"I've got the brooch, aunt!" I cried, for this seemed the dramatic moment. And I put it in her hand.

"I must have that, please," the detective interposed. "Do you identify it?"

"Identify it?" exclaimed Aunt Sarah, rapturously. "Of course I identify it! I'd



"SORRY TO TROUBLE YOU, MR. SIMPSON."

know my Uncle Joseph's brooch among ten thousand! And his initials and his hair and all! Identify it, indeed! I should think so! And did you get it from Bludgeoning Bill himself, Clement, my dear?"

Now, "Bludgeoning Bill" was the name I had given the chief ruffian of my story; rather a striking sort of name, I fancied. So I said, "Yes—yes. That's the name he's known by—among his intimates, of course. The police" (I had a vague idea of hedging, as far as possible, with the detective)—"the police only know his—his other names, I believe. A—a very dangerous sort of person!"

"And did you have much of a struggle with him?" pursued Aunt Sarah, hanging on my words.

"Oh, yes—terrible, of course. That is, pretty fair, you know—er—nothing so very extraordinary." I was getting flurried. That detective *would* look at me so intently.

"And was he very much hurt, Clement? Any bones broken, I mean, or anything of that sort?"

"Bones? O, yes, of course—at least, not many, considering. But it serves him right, you know—serves him right, of course."

"Oh, I'm sure he richly deserved it, Clement. I suppose that was in the thieves' kitchen?"

"Yes—no, at least; no, not there. Not exactly in the kitchen, you know."

"I see; in the scullery, I suppose," said Aunt Sarah, innocently. "And to think that you traced it all from a few footsteps and a bit of cloth rag on the wall and—and what else was it, Clement?"

"A trouser button," I answered. I felt a trifle more confident here, for I *had* found a trouser button. "But it was nothing much—not actual evidence, of course. Just a trifle, that's all."

But here I caught the policeman's eye, and I went hot and cold. I could not remember what I had done with that trouser button of mine. Had the police themselves found it later? Was this their clue? But I nerved myself to meet Aunt Sarah's fresh questions.

"I suppose there's no chance of getting the other things?" she asked.

"No," I answered, decisively, "not the least." I resolved not to search for any more facsimiles.

"Lummy Joe told you that, I suppose?" pursued my aunt, whose memory for names was surprising. "Either Lummy Joe or the Chickaleary Boy?"

"Both," I replied, readily. "Most valuable information from both—especially Chickaleary Joe. Very honourable chap, Joe. Excellent burglar, too."

Again I caught the detective's eye, and suddenly remembered that everything I had been saying might be brought up as evidence in a court of law. He was carefully noting all those rickety lies, and presently would write them down in his pocket-book, as he had threatened! Another question or two, and I think I should have thrown up the game voluntarily, but at that moment a telegram was brought in for Aunt Sarah. She put up her glasses, read it, and let the glasses fall. "*What!*" she squeaked.

She looked helplessly about her, and held the telegram toward me. "I must see that, please," the detective said.

It was from the manager of the hydropathic establishment at Malvern where Aunt Sarah had been staying, and it read thus:—

"Found leather jewel-case with your initials on ledge up chimney of room lately occupied here. Presume valuable, so am sending on by special messenger."

"Why, bless me!" said Aunt Sarah, as soon as she could find speech; "bless me! I—I felt *sure* I'd taken it down from the chimney and put it in the trunk!" And, with her eyes nearly as wide open as her mouth, she stared blankly in my face.

Personally I saw stars everywhere, as though I had been hit between the eyes with a club. I don't remember anything distinctly after this till I found myself in the street with the detective. I think I said I preferred waiting at the police-station.

It is unnecessary to say much more, and it would be very painful to me. I know, indirectly, through the police, that the jewel-case *did* turn up a few hours later, with the horrible brooch, and all the other things in it, perfectly safe. Aunt Sarah had put it up the chimney for safety at Malvern—just the sort of thing she would do—and made a mistake about bringing it away, that was all. There it had stayed for more than a week before it had been discovered, while Aunt Sarah was urging me to deception and fraud. That was some days ago, and I have not seen her since; I admit I am afraid to go. I see no very plausible way of accounting for those two brooches with the initials and the red hair—and no possible way of making them both fit with the thrilling story of Bludgeoning Bill and the thieves' kitchen. What am I to do?



"SHE LOOKED HELPLESSLY ABOUT HER."

But I have not told all yet. This is the letter I have received from Honoria Prescott, in the midst of my perplexities:—

"SIR,—I inclose your ring, and am sending your other presents by parcel delivery. I desire to see no more of you. And though I have been so grossly deceived, I confess that even now I find it difficult to understand your extraordinary taste for waitresses at low eating-houses. Fortunately my mother's kitchen-maid happens to be a relative of Hannah Dobbs, and it was because she very properly brought to my notice a letter which she had received from that young person that I learnt of your scandalous behaviour. I inclose the letter itself, that you may understand the disgust and contempt with which your conduct inspires me. —Your obedient servant,

"HONORIA PRESCOTT."

The lamentable scrawl which accompanied this letter I have copied below—at least the latter part of it, which is all that relates to myself:—

"Lore Jane i have got no end of a yung swel after me now and no mistake. quite the gent he is with a tort hatt and frock coat and spats and he comes here every day and eats what i know he dont want all for love of me and he give me $\frac{1}{2}$ a sofferin for a lock of my hare to day and rushed off blushin awful he has bin follerin me up and down the shop that loving for days, and presents of flowers that beautiful, and his name is Clement Simpson i got it off a letter he pulled out of his pocket one day he is that adgerated i think he is a friend of your missise havent i hard you say his name but I do love him that deer so now no more from yours afexintely,

"HANNAH DOBBS."

Again I ask any charitable person with brains less distracted than my own—What *aw* I to do? I wonder if Mr. Finch will give me an appointment as tract-distributor to the Esquimaux?

A Record of 1811.

OR, A SHEEP'S COAT AT SUNRISE, A MAN'S COAT AT SUNSET.

By J. R. WADE.



T is no new thing for us to see records established one day and beaten the next, the top place nowadays being no sooner reached by one individual than challenged by another. The record in the manufacture of cloth, however, with which this article deals, though of eighty-eight years' standing, has never yet been eclipsed.

The scene of this remarkable achievement in the sartorial art is the village of Newbury, Berkshire, and it came about in this way. Mr. John Coxeter, a then well-known cloth manufacturer, the owner of Greenham Mills, at the above-named village, remarked in the course of conversation one day in the year 1811, to Sir John Throckmorton, Bart., of Newbury, "So great are the improvements in machinery which I have lately introduced into my mill, that I believe that in twenty-four hours I could take the coat off your back, reduce it to wool, and turn it back into a coat again."

The proverb says, "There's many a true word spoken in jest." So great an impression did Mr. Coxeter's boast make upon the Baronet, that shortly afterwards he inquired of Mr. Coxeter if it would really be possible to make a coat from sheep's wool between the sunrise and sunset of a summer's day. That gentleman, after carefully calculating the time required for the various processes, replied that in his opinion it could be done.

Not long after the above conversation, which took place at a dinner

party, Sir John Throckmorton laid a wager of a thousand guineas that at eight o'clock in the evening of June the 25th, 1811, he would sit down to dinner in a well-woven, properly-made coat, the wool of which formed the fleeces of sheep's backs at five o'clock that same morning. Such an achievement appearing practically impossible to his listeners, his bet was eagerly accepted.

Sir John intrusted the accomplishment of the feat to Mr. Coxeter, and shortly before five o'clock on the morning stated, the early-rising villagers of Newbury were astonished to see their worthy squire, accompanied by his shepherd and two sheep, journeying towards Greenham Mills. Promptly at five o'clock operations commenced, and no time was lost in getting the sheep shorn. Our first illustration, which is from an old print executed at the time, shows the sheep being shorn by the shepherd, and is worthy of a little attention. Sir John stands in the middle of the picture, having his measurements taken by the tailor, and it is an interesting fact that, except that all imple-



FROM AN

WHEATING THE SHEEP.

SAME TIME.



From an

MAKING THE CLOTH.

[Old Print]

ments to be used were placed in readiness on the field of action, the smallest actual operations in the making of the coat were performed between the hours mentioned.

Mr. Coxeter stands just behind the sheep-shearer, watching with an anxious eye, whilst to the right may be seen a tent, which was erected presumably for refreshments, and schoolboys climbing a greasy-pole and generally making the best of the holiday which had been accorded them in order that they might witness this singular spectacle.

The sheep being shorn, the wool was washed, staided, roved, spun, and woven, and our next illustration, also from an old print, shows the weaving, which was performed by Mr. Coxeter, junior, who had been found by previous competition to be the most expert workman. In the background of this picture may be seen the carcass of one of the sheep; of which more later. The curious-looking objects in the basket, held, by the way, by another of Mr. Coxeter's sons, are wool spools, while in the extreme background, looking out of the window of a quaint old cottage, may be seen "the gods in the gallery."

When we compare the primitive-looking loom seen in this picture with the powerful machinery of to-day, the record then established certainly becomes all the more wonderful.

The cloth thus manufactured was next scoured, full'd, tented, raised, sheared, dyed, and dressed, being completed by four o'clock

ready during the operations, so that not a moment should be lost: and he, together with nine of his men, with needles all

in the afternoon, just eleven hours after the arrival of the two sheep in the mill-yard.

In the meantime, the news of the wager had spread abroad among the neighbouring villages, bringing crowds of people eager to witness the conclusion of this extraordinary undertaking.

The cloth was now put into the hands of the tailor, Mr. James White, who had already got all measurements



THE FINISHED COAT.

From a Photo by G. J. Gurney, Glasgow.

threaded, at once started on it. For the next two hours and a quarter the tailors were busy cutting out, stitching, pressing, and sewing on buttons, in fact, generally converting the cloth into a "well woven, properly made coat," and at twenty minutes past six Mr. Coxeter presented the coat to Sir John Throckmorton, who put the garment on before an assemblage of over five thousand people, and sat down to dinner with it on, together with forty gentlemen, at eight o'clock in the evening.

Through the kindness of Sir William Throckmorton, its present owner, we are able to give our readers, in the illustration shown at the bottom of the previous page, a photograph of this wonderful coat. The garment was a large hunting-coat of the then admired dark Wellington colour, a sort of a damson tint. It had been completed in the space of thirteen hours and ten minutes, the wager thus being won with an hour and three-quarters to spare.

To commemorate the event, the two sheep



MR. CHARLES COXETER, THE ONLY LIVING EYE-WITNESS.
From a Photo. by C. J. Coxeter, Abingdon.

who were the victims of Mr. Coxeter's energy were killed and roasted whole in a meadow near by, and distributed to the public, together with 120 gallons of strong beer, this latter being the gift of Mr. Coxeter.

Our next illustration is a photograph of Mr. Charles Coxeter, of Abingdon, Berks, the only living eye-witness to this feat. He is the younger brother to the weaver of the cloth, long since dead, who is shown in our second illustration. His present age is ninety-three. When approached on the subject he said he well remembered the event, and recalls with pleasure seeing the workmen dine off portions of the sheep, in a barge on the river near the mill. The original mill unfortunately no longer stands,

having long since been destroyed, a more modern mill now occupying the site.

We now give an illustration of the silver medal which was struck in honour of the occasion. It is worded as follows:

"Presented to Mr. John Coxeter, of Greenham Mills, by the Agricultural Society,



Animal Actualities.

NOTE.—These articles consist of a series of perfectly authentic anecdotes of animal life, illustrated by Mr. J. A. Shepherd, an artist long a favourite with readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE. We shall be glad to receive similar anecdotes, fully authenticated by names of witnesses, for use in future numbers. While the stories themselves will be matters of fact, it must be understood that the artist will treat the subject with freedom and fancy, more with a view to an amusing commentary than to a mere representation of the occurrence.

IX.



THIS is a tale of true love that no social distinctions could hinder; of a love that persisted in spite of misfortune, disfigurement, and poverty; of a love that ruled not merely the camp, the court, and the grove, but the back garden also: of a love that (as Mr. Seaman sings) "was strong love, strong as a

big barn-door"; of a love that, no doubt, would have laughed at locksmiths had the cachinnation been necessary; that, in short, was the only genuine article, with the proper trade-mark on the label.

"Pussy" was the name of a magnificent Persian cat—a princess among cats, greatly sought by the feline nobility of the neigh-





BOWING THEIR RESPECTS.

bourhood. She was the sort of cat that no merely individual name would be good enough for; her magnificence soared above all such smallnesses, and, as she was *the* ideal cat, combining all the glories and all the beauties of cat-hood in herself, she was called, simply and comprehensively, "Pussy." She condescended to reside at the house, and at the expense, of Mr.

Thomas C. Johnson, of The Firs, Alford, Lincolnshire, and all the most aristocratic Toms of the vicinity were suitors for the paw of this princess. Blue Persians, buff Persians, Manx cats, Angora cats—all were her devoted slaves, and it was generally expected that she would make a brilliant match. She had a house (or palace) of her own at the back of Mr. Johnson's. Here were her bed, her larder—an elegant

shelf supporting her wire meat safe, and her special knife and fork for her meat must be cut up for her—and her plate and saucer. And here, by the door, many suitors waited to bow their respects as she came forth to take the air. But Pussy, who trod the earth as though the planet were far too common for her use,

turned up her nose at the noble throng, and dismissed them with effective and sudden language, conjectured to be a very vigorous dialect of Persian.

Then came, meekly crawling and limping to her door, one Lamech, a cat of low degree and no particular breed. His only claim to distinction of any sort was that he



VERY VIGOROUS PERMAN.

had lost a leg—perhaps in a weasel-trap. He was ill-fed, bony, and altogether disreputable; his ears were sore, and his coat unkempt. He came not as a suitor, but as a beggar, craving any odd scraps that the princess might have no use for. So low was he esteemed, indeed, that nobody called him Lamech, his proper name, and he was

familiarly and contemptuously known as "Three-legged Tommy." When the princess's human friends saw Three-legged Tommy hanging about, they regarded him as a

his regalement. There was intense commotion among the scorned feline nobility. Three-legged Tommy was actually admitted into that sacred palace, from the portals of

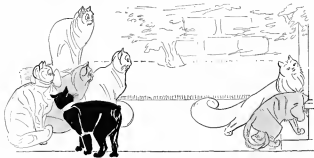


COMMOTION AMONG THE NOBILITY.

nuisance and a probable offence in the sight of the princess. Wherefore they chased him mercilessly, tempering their severities, however, by flinging him scraps of food, as far out into the road as possible.

which the most distinguished cats in Alford had been driven away!

As for Three-legged Tommy himself, he grew not only more confident, but more knowing. He came regularly at meal times.



PASSING THE SACRED PORTAL.

But presently a surprising thing was observed. Pussy actually *encouraged* Three-legged Tommy! More, she fed him, and her last drop of new milk and her last and tenderest morsel of meat were reserved for

More, he grew fatter, and less ragged. The princess enjoyed her self-sacrifice for a time, but presently she set herself to get a double ration. Sharing her provisions was all very loving and all very well, but she began to

feel that there were advantages in a full meal; and Three-legged Tommy, now grown much more respectable, though a hopeless plebeian still, distinctly gave her to understand that he could do with a bit more.

powerless to resist her, he would rise and follow.

Meat it was, of course. And when it was cut she would attack it with every appearance of ravenous hunger—till the master's



"THE PLANT IS SPREAD FOR THEE!"

Three-legged Tommy was the princess's first and only love, but next in her affections ranked Mr. Johnson. It was her habit to follow him about the house and garden, and to confide her troubles to him, sitting on his knee. But now she tried stratagem. Five or six times a day she would assail him with piteous mew, entreating caresses, beseeching eyes, and the most irresistibly captivating manners she could assume. "What can she want?" he would say. "She has not long been fed. Is it meat, old girl?" And,

back was turned. Then—"Come, my love, the feast is spread for thee!"

Out would limp Lamech from behind some near shrub, and Pussy would sit with supreme satisfaction and watch her spouse's enjoyment of the meal she had cajoled for him. And so Three-legged Tommy waxed fat and prospered, and the Beautiful Princess was faithful to him always. Miss Mary Johnson, who was so kind as to send us the story, calls Pussy "a devoted helpmeet." We trust she meant no pun.



X.

The Puppy's Amusement.



TORTOISE has many virtues, as for instance, quietness, dignity, and lack of ambition. But, as a rule, activity and courage are not credited to the tortoise. This is a little anecdote of a tortoise who displayed both, in so far as to encounter, single-handed, a terrible puppy more than a fortnight old, and several inches high at the shoulder.

for slugs or other garden pests. The man who sells them most solemnly avers they have, but that is only his fancy; the tortoise—at any rate, the tortoise he sells—is a vegetarian, as well as a teetotaler and a non-smoker. But as to the strawberry leaves, these are longed for by the tortoise even more than lettuce leaves. Enthusiasm is not a distinguishing characteristic of the tortoise,



A MATCH.

Though the tortoise's lack of ambition may be accepted as a general principle, nevertheless it is relaxed in the dual matter of strawberry leaves. Every tortoise of the sort we keep about our houses and gardens has an ambition for strawberry leaves—to eat. It may also be said as a warning (having nothing to do with this anecdote) that the tortoise has no ambition, or taste,

but when he is enthusiastic it is over strawberry leaves. The tortoise of our anecdote (he had no domestic name, such was his humility) had the even tenor of his life disturbed by a sudden inroad of puppies, who made things very busy about him. The puppies did not altogether understand the tortoise, and the tortoise never wanted to understand the puppies. But the puppies



A CHASE.

were playful and inquisitive. One morning, just as the tortoise had laid hold of a very acceptable "runner" of strawberry leaves, a puppy, looking for fun, seized the other end in his teeth and pulled. Something had to go, and it was the strawberry

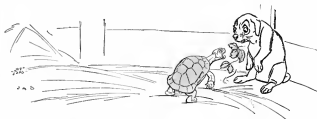
Was it really angry? What would it do to him? His experience of tortoises was small, and this one looked very threatening. Perhaps the safest game was to drop the strawberry leaves, at any rate. So dropped they were, and the puppy sat back in the



A SOLE.

leaf the tortoise happened to be biting, close by his mouth. Off went the puppy, trailing the "runner" after him, the tortoise toiling laboriously in the rear. Presently the puppy, finding that speed was no accomplishment of the tortoise, stopped at a corner and waited.

corner, a trifle apprehensive of what might happen next. But the strawberry leaves were all the tortoise wanted, and those he snatched, and straightway squatted down upon them. Then he ate them, little by little and bite by bite, at his leisure, regarding the



A SNAP.

Up came the tortoise, drums beating and colours flying, metaphorically speaking, and actually looking as threatening as a harmless tortoise can manage to look. "Snap!" went the tortoise. The puppy was nonplussed. What was this thing?

puppy defiantly the while. And the puppy carried to all his brothers and sisters a terrible tale of the progress of that crawling monstrosity that ate leaves, and got formidably angry if you snatched them away for fun.



A VICTORY.



By F. C. YOUNGER.

IT was midnight: the Witch was sitting on an upturned basket in the hen-house, staring at the Memory-Saver. No one but a witch could have seen at all inside the hen-house, but this particular Witch had gathered pieces of decayed wood on the way there, lit them at glow-worms, and stuck them on the walls. They burnt with a weird, blue light, and showed the old Witch on the basket scratching her bristly chin; the Black Cock in a kind of faint up one corner, with his eyes turned up till they showed the whites; the empty nest; the halves of a broken egg-shell on the floor; and beside them a tiny round black lump with all sorts of queer little tags hanging on to it, which was staring back at the Witch with two frightened little pink eyes.

"It's quite a new idea," said the Witch to herself. "A Memory-Saver! How thankful

many people would be to get hold of one! But they don't know the way, and they won't ask me. They don't know how to hatch an imp to save your memory from a cock's egg. They even say that a cock never lays eggs. Such ignorance! Cocks always lay them at midnight and eat them before morning; and that's why no one has ever seen one. But if you are careful to sprinkle the cock with Witch-water three nights running, he will lay an egg he cannot eat; and if you bless the egg with the Witch's curse, and roast it three nights in the Witch's fire, when the moon is on the wane, it will hatch a Memory-Saver. But poor mortals don't know this, and that's why they're always worrying and 'taxing their memories,' as they call it, instead of hiring a nice little imp to save them the trouble. Come here, my dear!" she added, addressing the Memory-Saver.

The little black lump rolled over and over

until he reached her feet, then gave a jump and landed on two of the thickest of his tags, which supported him like two little legs. With two others he began to rub his little black self all over, while he shed little green tears from his little pink eyes.

He was a queer little person, very like an egg in shape, with no features but a pair of little pink eyes near the top, and a wide slit which went about half-way round him and served him for a mouth. The Witch regarded him in silence; she knew that inside him was nothing but a number of little rooms, carefully partitioned off from one another, which could be emptied by pulling the tag attached to each outside.

There was no sound in the hen-house but the frightened clucking of the hens, the gasping of the Black Cock in the corner, and the sobbing of the imp, which sounded like the squeaking of a slate-pencil on a slate. Presently the Witch patted the Memory-Saver on the head.

"Don't cry, my dear," she said; "there's nothing to cry about! And don't look at that silly Black Cock in the corner. He isn't your Mother any longer. I'm your Mother now—at least, all the Mother you'll get, and I shall pinch you if you don't work. I'll just see if you are in good working order now."

She lifted the imp in her hand as she spoke, and pulled one of the little tags hanging behind him. The Memory-Saver gave a gasp, and, opening his mouth to its widest extent, he began to repeat, rapidly: "J'ai—tu as—il a—nous avons—vous avez—ils ont."

"Very good!" said the Witch, "the French string is in order. I'll try the poetry."

She pulled another tag as she spoke.

*Th' Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming like purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,*

*When the blue—wavesell—nightly on deep Gallilee
panted the Memory-Saver.*

"A little jerky," said the Witch, doubling the strings round the imp and putting him in her pocket; "but it will work smoother in time. It's a splendid idea," she went on, as she buttoned her cloak and opened the door. "A Memory-Saver! Pull the string of the subject you want (the name is written on each tag), and the imp will tell you all about it. Read a set of lessons to him, and then pull the strings belonging to them, and he'll reel them all off word for word. How many

children I know would like to get him to take to school in their pockets! There's little Miss Myra, who is always in trouble about her lessons; she would give all she's got for him. But I'll only part with him at my own price."

The Witch had left the hen-house, and was trotting as fast as she could down a little woodland path. The poor little Memory-Saver was joggled this way and that among the rubbish in the Witch's pocket—queer stones, herbs, little dead toads, pounded spiders, and bats' wings. He would soon have been black with bruises if he had not been black by nature. But the worst pain he suffered was anxiety as to what would become of him. What was the Witch going to do with him? Why had she taken him away from the Black Cock, who at least was friendly if he did gasp and show the whites of his eyes? The imp cried again, and wondered how long he would have to stay in that choky pocket.

He had not long to wait. That very afternoon the Witch saw Myra crying over her lessons at the window. She was kept in to learn them, and was feeling miserable and cross. No one was about, so the Witch crept up to the window, and told her all about the Memory-Saver, ending by producing him from her pocket. Oh! how glad he was to get out! He sat gasping with delight on the Witch's hand, while she explained his talents to someone. Who was it? The imp looked up and saw a little girl about ten years old, with an inky pinafore, and long, tumbled brown curls. She looked so much nicer than the Witch, that the Memory-Saver gazed up in her face with a forlorn little smile—or at least a smile that would have been "little" if his mouth had not been so wide.

"What a queer little thing!" cried Myra. "I should like to have him, only—how *could* he do all you say?"

"Just listen," said the Witch, pulling a string.

"William I., 1666—William II., 1687—Henry I., 1100—Stephen, 1135 said the Memory-Saver, solemnly.

Myra danced with delight.

"Oh, he's splendid!" she cried. "He's just what I want. I never can remember dates. Oh, how much does he cost? I'm afraid I haven't enough money."

"I'm sure you haven't," said the Witch. "I wouldn't part with him for untold gold."

"Then it's no use," said Myra, sadly. "I

haven't even got *told* gold, only three shillings and twopence-ha'penny."

"You've got something else that will do better," said the Witch, coaxingly. "Hasn't your brother a large collection of moths and butterflies?"

"Yes," said Myra, looking rather puzzled; "but what has that to do with it?"

"Show me the top drawer of his cabinet, dear," said the Witch.

Myra walked to the cabinet, still wondering, drew out the top drawer, and took it to the window.

The Witch looked up and down the long rows of moths, each with its wings outspread on a separate pin. At last she picked out a great death's-head, and looked at it lovingly. It was a beautiful specimen, just what she wanted for her latest potion, a wonderful mixture that would enable you to turn fifteen cart-wheels on a cobweb without breaking it. "I'll give you the Memory-Saver for this," she cried, eagerly.

"Oh, but it isn't mine!" said Myra, hastily pulling back the drawer.

"It's your brother's, dear," coaxed the Witch. "You know he would not mind."

"He would," said Myra; "it's his best specimen; he told me so yesterday."

"Well, it does him no good in the drawer," pleaded the Witch; "and the Memory-Saver would prevent your being scolded and punished for not knowing your lessons, as you are almost every day. Besides, you could easily save your pocket-money and buy him another moth."

"They're so dear!" sighed Myra. "But grandma always gives me half a sovereign at Christmas. Well, if you like——"

Myra always maintains that she never gave

the Witch permission to take the moth; but, as she spoke, they both vanished, and Myra only saw the drawer with the big gap in its row of moths where the death's-head had been, and the Memory-Saver

grinning ecstatically at her from the window-sill. Poor little fellow; he was so glad to get away from the Witch's pocket.

Myra's first thought was to move the pins of the other moths, so as to fill up the big gap.

"Then perhaps he won't notice it's gone," she said to herself; "and, as the Witch said, it didn't do him any good in the drawer."

Then she took up the little Memory-Saver and examined him curiously. He was a funny little creature—funnier than ever just now, for he was trying to express

his joy at his change of mistresses, which produced a violent commotion in all his tags, and considerably enlarged his mouth. Myra couldn't help laughing, but as she was rather afraid of offending the Memory-Saver, she begged his pardon immediately, and made him a comfortable seat on some books on the table.

"Now, Memory-Saver," she said, "I'm going to read my lessons aloud to you, as the Witch told me. Then you'll know them all, won't you?"

The Memory-Saver nodded so emphatically, that he fell off the books. Myra picked him up, examined him anxiously to see if he were hurt, and, finding he was not, sat him down again.

"I've got two lots of lessons to do," she said, mournfully, "yesterday's and to-day's. Could you do both at once, or would it strain you too much?"

The Memory-Saver shook himself off his



"WHAT A queer little thing!" cried Myra.

seat this time, in his eagerness to assure her he could do twenty lots if necessary. When he was once more settled comfortably, Myra began to read. The Memory-Saver sat contentedly absorbing French, and geography, and tables.

"I wonder if you really know it all," said Myra, gravely, when she had finished. "No, don't nod any more, or you will fall off again. I'll just try one string." She took him up, found the one marked "Tables," and gave it a gentle tug.

"Once nine is nine, twice nine are eighteen, three times nine are twenty-seven," said the Memory-Saver, glibly.

"Stop! Stop! that will do!" cried Myra, delighted. "Don't use it all up before to-morrow."

The next thing was to find somewhere to keep her new treasure—some place where no one could find him; for Myra felt certain that the stupid grown-up people would not approve of her imp, or see his usefulness as clearly as she did.

"They always say, 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try again,' and 'You must cultivate your memory,' when I tell them I can't remember my lessons," she said to herself. "They would take the Memory-Saver away from me if they found him. I must put it somewhere so that they *can't* find him."

Such a place was not easy to find, but at last Myra fixed on the top of the wardrobe in her bedroom.

"They only dust there at spring cleaning time," she said to herself, "and I can move him then."

So she filled a box with cotton-wool, put the Memory-Saver in it, and placed it on top of the wardrobe.

"Are you quite comfortable?" she asked; and the Memory-Saver almost nodded himself out of his box in his joy. It was Paradise after the Witch's pocket.

"What a good thing he doesn't want anything to eat," thought Myra, noticing with satisfaction that the woodwork of the wardrobe quite hid him from anyone below. "The Witch said he feeds on the lessons. How horrible! I shouldn't like French verbs for breakfast, and grammar for dinner. They can't be satisfying, but anyhow, they're easy to get. I always have more than I want."

For some days the Memory-Saver was a great success. Myra put him carefully in her pocket before she went to school, and pulled the right string when she was called up to say her lessons. His voice was rather a

sing-song, but that couldn't be helped. Miss Prisms, the schoolmistress, sent home to Myra's delighted mother a report that her little girl was making wonderful progress in everything but arithmetic and writing. In these, alas, the Memory-Saver could not help her. He could say tables, and weights and measures, but could not do sums in his head, for the simple reason that he had no head.

At first he was very happy, for Myra took great care of him; but by degrees she grew careless. She found out he was quite as useful when treated roughly as when treated kindly, and as it was less trouble to treat him roughly, she did so.

"Why can't you do mental arithmetic?" she asked him, severely, one day when she had got into trouble over her sums. "Aren't you ashamed to be so ignorant, you little imp?"

The Memory-Saver waved his little tags in a wild attempt to explain that it was because he hadn't got a mind, only two little pink eyes, a big mouth, and a lot of little partitions inside him to keep the different kinds of knowledge apart. Unhappily the many bumps he had had lately had been very bad for his internal constitution, even if the bruises had not shown outside; the partitions were beginning to leak. All this he tried to explain by waving his little arms and legs. But Myra was unsympathetic and did not understand him. She scolded him heartily, and was not even melted by the little green tears that trickled from his little pink eyes into his big mouth. But she was to be punished for it. The poor little Memory-Saver had to remember all that was said to him whether he liked it or not, and so, when Myra pulled the geography string next morning in school, he began: "England is bounded on the north by Scotland . . . why can't you do mental arithmetic? . . . on the south by the English Channel . . . aren't you ashamed . . . on the east by the German Ocean . . . to be so ignorant . . . and on the west by the Irish Sea . . . you little imp . . . and St. George's Channel."

"Myra!" gasped Miss Prisms, and for at least two minutes could say no more.

"I—I—didn't mean anything," stammered Myra, blushing crimson and ready to cry.

"I should hope not," said Miss Prisms, severely. "You will learn double lessons for to-morrow, Myra."

"It's all your fault!" said Myra, angrily, to the Memory-Saver, when she got home.

"You must learn all the lessons for me, and then I'm going to slap you, do you hear? You horrid little thing!"

The Memory-Saver heard well enough, and understood too. Myra was in a very bad temper. Her brother had discovered that his death's-head moth was missing, and was making what Myra called a "ridiculous fuss."



"HIS BROTHER WAS MAKING A 'RIDICULOUS FUSS.'"

about it. He had not asked her if she knew where it was, but she felt very uncomfortable all the same. She did not think he would have minded so much. Being uncomfortable, she was cross; and as she dared not be cross with Miss Prisms, she was cross with the Memory-Saver, and fulfilled her promise of slapping him when he had done the double lessons for her. She was too absorbed in her own trouble to notice that his box was half off the wardrobe top when she put him—not over-gently—into it; and the bump with which she landed on the floor as she got down from the chair on which she had been standing quite drowned the bump the box made, as it fell behind the wardrobe. The poor little Memory-Saver fell out with a crash, and lay half stunned, feebly waving his little tags. No one came to pick him up, so he lay there all through the long, dark night. He was cracked all over, and something very peculiar

had happened to his interior. In fact, though he did not know it, all the partitions had at last given way, and the French, history, spelling, geography, and tables had run into one another, and were now all mixed in one great pulpy mass inside him. No wonder he felt uncomfortable!

When Myra came for him in the morning she found out what had happened. She fished him out from behind the wardrobe with a good deal of difficulty, and looked at him in consternation. He was sticky all over with the tears he had shed, was very soft and limp, and, worst of all, was leaking the Wars of the Roses and the chief towns of France from more than one crack. However, Myra was late as it was; she had no time to examine him carefully. She put him in her pocket, and ran off to school. She put her hand in her pocket to feel if he were safe as soon as she got to her seat. He felt softer and stickier than ever. Would he be able to say the lessons? Myra felt doubtful, but as she did not remember a word of them herself, she was obliged to trust to him. Trembling she pulled the "Poetry" string, when Miss Prisms called on her for her lesson. The

Memory-Saver gasped, and began; each word hurt him very much to bring out, but as they came he began to feel strange and light, happier than he had ever felt before. This is what he said: "A chieftain to the Highlands bound—cries—the feminine of adjectives is formed by adding eleven times nine are Rouen, former capital of Normandy, and heir presumptive to the throne by his descent from the son of Edward III., eleven times twelve are le père, the father, la mère, the mother—Oh, I'm the chief of Ulva's isle, and this, Paris on the Seine . . ."

"Myra, stop at once!" cried Miss Prisms, angrily; but Myra, or, rather, the Memory-Saver, could not stop. His internal partitions were gone, and whichever string was pulled, he was obliged to let out all that was inside him. So for ten dreadful minutes he went on, pouring out French, geography,

history, and tables in one terrible mixture, while Myra wished she could sink through the floor, the girls tittered, and Miss Prisms' anger changed to anxiety. She began to fan

he said; "let her stay away from school for a week, and send for me if another attack comes on."

Myra was not sorry for the holiday; it gave her time to examine the Memory-Saver carefully. She ran through the garden to a little nook by the duck-pond, where no one could see her, before she dared take him out of her pocket and look at him! Poor little Memory-Saver! She could hardly recognise him as the round, plump, cheery little fellow who had first beamed at her from the window-sill. He was quite flat, for Myra had sat on him in her excitement; he was soft and pulpy; his little pink eyes had re-

treated and lost colour, and his great mouth opened and shut in gasps, like that of a fish out of water.

Myra gazed at him horrified. What could she do to revive him? She turned him over and fanned him with a dock-leaf, but he only gasped. Then she tried the effect of a little geography, but the result was disastrous; as fast as it entered the poor little imp, it oozed out again all over him, and he turned almost green with pain.

"Why are you tormenting my offspring?" said a sharp, angry voice at Myra's elbow. "Leave him alone, or give him to me; I'm hungry!"

It was Myra's turn to gasp now; the Black Cock had never spoken to her before, and she did not even know he could talk. She looked at him more than half-frightened.

"He—he isn't yours, he's mine," she stammered.

"Yours, indeed!" crowed the Black Cock, indignantly, "when I had all the trouble of laying him! Wasn't he hatched from one of my eggs at midnight, and stolen by the Witch?"

"I didn't know he was," said Myra.

"Well, now you do!" retorted the Cock, "Give him up! Didn't I tell you I was hungry?"



"THE GIRLS' TITHE-BOX."

Myra with an exercise-book, begged her to be quiet, and assured her she would be "better directly." At last, however, the Memory-Saver came to an end; he would have been much longer, but a great deal had leaked out of him in the night.

"Twelve twelves are a hundred and forty-four—Bayonne, at the mouth of the Adour, mounted the throne as Henry VII," he concluded.

Myra burst out crying. Miss Prisms made her take sal-volatile and lie on the sofa in her sitting-room. As soon as school was over, she took Myra home herself, and told her mother the little girl must be going to have brain-fever. The doctor was called in and shook his head, looking very wise, although he could find nothing at all the matter with Myra. "It is a curious case,"

"But you wouldn't eat your own child?" cried Myra, aghast.

"Child or not," said the Black Cock, "no kind of beetles come amiss to me."

"He isn't a beetle, he's a Memory-Saver," said Myra. The Black Cock laughed, and Myra shrank back; she had never heard a Black Cock laugh before, and felt she would not be sorry to never hear it again; it was not a pleasant sound.

"I don't know anything about Memories," said the Black Cock; "but look at him, and then tell me he's not a beetle!"

Myra looked anxiously. Certainly something very curious was happening to the Memory-Saver: his little legs had arranged themselves in rows underneath him; he was growing longer, he was very like a beetle. *He was a beetle!*

Myra, who could not bear beetles, rose with a scream and threw him out of her lap on to the mud. The Black Cock rushed at him as he scuttled towards the water, but Myra drove him back, and allowed the Memory-Saver time to reach the pond. She gave a little sigh of relief as he disappeared, while the Black Cock gave an angry crow, turned his back on Myra, and stalked back to the poultry yard. He never spoke to her again, but whether it was because he was too offended, or for other reasons, Myra never knew.

"After all," she thought, as she went home, "I'm glad he turned into a water-beetle. It must be much more comfortable than always being full of lessons. I suppose he'll live on mud now. I hope he'll be happy. He was a good little fellow, and I wish I'd been kinder to him. How interested they will all be at home when I tell them about him!"

But they were not. They said she must be going to have brain-fever, and sent for the doctor again. The only part of her story they believed was that she had taken her brother's moth from the cabinet, and this they said was naughty, and she must save up her pocket-money and buy another.

"I'll never, never tell a grown-up person anything again!" thought Myra.

As for the Memory-Saver, at the bottom of the pond he met a pretty young lady water-beetle, and asked her to marry him at once,



"SHE THREW HIM OUT OF HER LAP."

which she did. He raised a large family, and lived very happily ever after. None of the ducks dare touch him for fear of the Witch, so that he found life much more pleasant than when he was a Memory-Saver. Myra often walked round the pond, looking for him, but she never saw either him or the old Witch again.

Curiosities.*

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

A MAMMOTH SHIRT.

The immense shirt seen in the illustration below was constructed for a shirtmaker at Sioux City, Iowa. It was mounted on a bicycle and figured in the parades of the Carnival Festival in October of last year. The yoke measured 5ft. 2in. from shoulder to shoulder, waist 21ft. 3in., height 8ft., and collar size 57in. and 12in. high. Twenty-five yards of muslin were used in making it, and the ironing of the bosom was no small job, taking an expert 2½ hours. Our photograph was taken on "Bicycle Day." Previously, on "Industrial Day," it had taken first prize as the most novel exhibit. On that day the bicycle races were not in evidence, nor was the man in the collar, the shirt gliding gracefully along the street without apparent motive power. The photograph was sent in by Mr. E. Davis, Sioux City, Iowa, U.S.A.



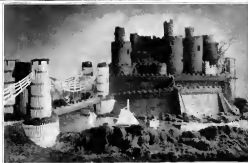
ENTERPRISE, EXTRAORDINARY— AND ITS RESULT.

In the spring of each year the enterprising firm of Cartwright and Huntington, of Portland, Ind., U.S.A., present their customers with pumpkin seed, offering substantial prizes for the heaviest pumpkin grown from their seed. The specimen seen in our photo, which was sent in by Mr. Clyde S. Whipple, of the Auditorium, Portland, is the prize-winner out of 140 competitors. It weighs 153lb., and is 7ft. in circumference. The little boy inside is four years old.



ANOTHER TRADE TROPHY.

This charming model of Conway Castle and Bridge is made entirely from tobacco and cigarettes, and is the work of Mr. John H. Harrison, of 247, West Derby Road, Liverpool. Mr. Harrison writes as follows: "The length of the model, which I am exhibiting in my window, is 8½ft.; depth, 2½ft.; height, from surface of water to top of towers, 5ft. The real genuine article is used for the water, in which gold-fish disport themselves, although for the purposes of the photo. we substituted mirrors. This model has been a great source of attraction."



From a Photo by Melvin A. White, Liverpool.

* Copyright, 1899, by George N. Corcoran, Limited.



FOR THE USE OF CHORISTERS.

Here we see a gigantic "singing trumpet," which is preserved in East Leake Parish Church, Northamptonshire. Only four or five specimens of these trumpets are now in existence. They appear to have been used in some of the Midland Counties until a generation or so ago, and were patronized by less singers only. The effect of singing through the trumpet was to give great depth and power to the voice. The large end rested on the front of the gallery, while the other was held in the hand. When drawn out to its full extent (it has one slide, like a telescope), the trumpet measures 7 ft. 6 in., and its mouth is 1 ft. 9 in. in diameter. Truly, a fearsome instrument! Photo. sent in by Mr. Philip E. Mellard, M.B., Costock Rectory, Loughborough.

NOAH'S ARK

This quaint sculptured stone is now included with many other fragments, evidently of some church, in a wall in Appleby, Westmorland. At first one wonders how the date—who has unfortunately lost her head—ever managed to leave the ark either by



the window or by the magnificent iron-plated door, but this wonder gives place to amazement when one notices the size of the patriarch's hand (seen through the window), and commences to speculate on how he, his children, and the animals find accommodation for their grand proportions in this small boat; the problem of packing them would tax the ingenuity of a sardine-merchant. Photo. sent in by Mr. A. S. Reid, Trinity College, Glasnevin.

FACES IN A MAPLE KNOT

At first sight this photo. looks like an ancient gargyle off some church tower, but it is in reality nothing more or less than a knot of maple, found near Maunakee, Wis., U.S.A., by a man of that town. The finder positively asserts that no knife has been



used to produce the faces. You will notice that the mouth of the upper face is even equipped with teeth. We are indebted for the photo. to Mr. T. R. Bowring, photographer, of De Pere, Wisconsin.

AN EARLY PHOTO. OF GENERAL GORDON.

The accompanying photo has a melancholy interest. It represents General Gordon as a Captain in the Royal Engineers, and was taken in 1858 or '59. Our photo. was taken from a scrap-book, which formerly belonged to the late Mr. James Pynn. We are indebted to Mr. H. Powell, 1, Newison Street, King's Cross, W.C., for forwarding the photo.





THE DEVIL'S SPOUT.

Some months ago we reproduced a photo. of the "Puffing Hole" of Killybeg, Ireland. Here we have a view of a similar phenomenon situated on the coast of Durham, between South Shields and Marsden. At certain times of the tide, and during stormy weather, the water rushes into a cave by an opening at the sea level. This water, together with an enormous quantity of imprisoned air, spouts out of a small hole at the apex of the cavern to an immense height, and, if the sun happens to be shining, a beautiful rainbow is formed. Local tradition, of course, assigns the authorship of this phenomenon to his Satanic Majesty, the hole being known as the "Devil's Spout." Photo. sent in by Mr. H. Ellingham, Eastgarth, Westoe, S. Shields.

A PHONOGRAPHIC POSTCARD.

Addressing communications to the post just for the pleasure of seeing whether the hand-worked authorities will be equal to deciphering them is perhaps not very considerate, but the officials are so very rarely found at fault that the laugh is almost always on their side. This phonographic postcard was delivered at the house of Mr. E. H. King, of Belle View House, Richmond, Surrey, who sent us the card within an hour and a half after he had posted it to himself locally.



A PERAMBULATING TOWER.

The gentleman seen in this excellent little snap-shot is a Covent Garden porter, and he is carrying the fourteen basket seen in our photo. in the execution of his ordinary duties. The baskets make a column of some 196in., or 16ft. 4in. Add 5ft. 10in. as the height of the carrier, and you get a walking



column 22ft. 2in. high. The carrying of these baskets was not done for a nagger. There is room for speculation as to what would have been the result of the sudden advent of a runaway horse. Photo. by Mr. W. R. Northrop, 35, Essex Street, Strand, W.C.



A PAPER TELESCOPE.

This is probably the largest paper telescope in Great Britain. The body of the instrument is entirely covered with thick brown paper, its length being 25ft., and the object glass 12in. in diameter. With this apparatus, the mountains on the surface of the moon appear with great clearness. The group represents a family studying astronomy. The girl standing by the side of the gentleman looking through the telescope holds a Nautical Almanac in her hand, and is aiding the observers with details from its valuable records.

LITERARY WASPS.

Says the Rev. W. B. Thomas, of The Beeches, Ottenston, Haverfordwest, who forwarded the annexed photo:—"A number of books were put away in a box in an attic, and forgotten. When the dog-days came, with their sultry heat, the windows of the attic were kept wide open, with the result that a swarm of wasps took possession of the box and built their combs out of the books, boring right through many of the stout covers. The difficulty of rescuing the remains of the books, and dislodging the wasps, was consider-

able, and involved many painful stings." Our photo. shows the combs after prolonged immersion in water, together with some pieces of the books.

THE CATS' COTTAGE.

The luxurious little mansion seen in the accompanying reproduction is built of bricks cut to about one-fourth of their usual size, and the windows are of glasses fitted into wooden frames in the usual manner. There are four rooms—each with plastered walls and carpeted floor—and a "practicable" staircase leads to the first and second



floors. The house was built by Stanley Barlow, a son of the Moravian minister of Leominster, as a residence for his two cats, who have lived in it for more than a year, making good use of all the arrangements for their comfort, and apparently quite proud of their unique little domicile. The building is 4ft. 5in. high, and 4ft. broad, and boasts the name of "Tumelcliffe Villa," the owner being an enthusiastic admirer of the Yorkshire baron. Photo. sent in by Mr. Alf. Death, of Fern Cottage, Leominster.



From a photo by R. Spence, Stradbroke.

REMARKABLE WHEAT STACK.

The stack shown in the accompanying illustration has been standing upon a farm at Stradbroke, in Suffolk, for over twenty-one years, and is probably the oldest in England. It is the produce of a field of wheat grown in 1877, when prices ruled somewhat high, and the owner declared that he would not sell it for less than 30s. per comb. As the market value has never risen to this figure he has rigorously kept to his word, and the stack remains unthatched to this day. Externally, it presents quite an antique appearance, and a glance at our illustration will show what havoc the rats have made; and every few years, when the stack is re-thatched, the blackened straw contrasts strangely with its new roof. Photo. sent in by Mr. E. Bond, The Rookery, Eye, Suffolk.

A RUNAWAY COAL TRUCK.

The car seen peering out of a breach in the wall of the building in our photo, was loaded with twenty tons of coal, and belonged to the Orange

Electric Light and Power Co., of New Jersey. It was given a push by its engine about a quarter of a mile from the incline, which rises steeply from the ground to the first floor of the building seen in our illustration. Apparently the push was too hard, for the truck went away at a tremendous pace, which the brakeman was powerless to moderate, sailed up the incline like a bird, and was brought to a standstill by the brick wall, out of which it "budded" a huge fragment. Photo. sent in by Mr. W. H. Wagner, 105, Watchung Avenue, West Orange, N. J.

MARKINGS ON THE MUZZLE OF A GUN.

This photo. shows the muzzle of a 12-inch gun.



The curious markings are always to be observed, to a greater or less extent, upon firing any gun; they are probably caused by the escape of the gases past the "driving-band" at the moment it leaves the muzzle. The "driving-band" is the lining ring on the base of the projectile, which cuts its way through the rifling of the gun, giving the shot the necessary rotary movement. The regularity of each spurt of gas is very singular. We are indebted for the snapshot to an officer in H. M. Navy.



"THE SPITE HOUSE."

This odd building stands on the corner of 161st Street and Melrose Avenue, New York City. It is a bit over 4ft. in depth, 17ft. frontage, and one and a-half storeys high, with a basement and sub-basement built under the broad sidewalk, extending to the curb. The house itself is of wood, on a steel frame, and has a slate roof. Its owner is an eccentric tailor, who lives and carries on his trade below the street. The interior consists of a small show-room, a store room, and spiral iron stairway going down to the "lower regions." The upper storey seems to have been constructed merely as a finishing touch. It is reached by an iron ladder from the store-room. The entire construction, appointments, and fittings are very ingenious, and are all the ideas of the owner. The story of the house is that the original lot was cut away in opening the avenue, save only the few feet now occupied by the building. A controversy arose between the tailor and the owner of the adjoining property regarding the disposal of the small strip, and the tailor becoming enraged because his neighbours would neither sell his property nor pay the price the knight of the shears demanded, built this odd structure out of spite. The photo. was taken just at the completion of the building, and before the street had been fully paved. It shows, however, the dimensions of the building, and also the construction under the street, etc. Photo. sent in by Mr. W. R. Yard, 195, Fifth Avenue, New York City.

usual way. When opened, however, the yolk was found to be in the form of a cord 45in. long and $\frac{1}{16}$ in. wide. It was irregularly coiled up, twisted many times, and had a knot firmly tied in the middle. Altogether, it was very much like a long bootlace of a deep yellow colour." The original is now in the Museum of the University of Melbourne.

A CANDIDATE FOR APOPLEXY.

Here is an amusing snap-shot of a boy hanging head downwards from the roof of a summer-house. From the expression of delicious joy on his face, it is evident that the young gentleman finds it difficult to maintain his position. We are indebted for the snap-shot to Mrs. R. A. Hayes, 82, Merion Square South, Dublin.



AN EGG WITH A BOOT-LACE YOLK.

We have heard much of the vagaries of the breakfast egg of commerce, but the egg which contained the extraordinary yolk seen in the annexed photo. must normally have been quite out of the common run. We will let Dr. James T. Mitchell, of 15, Raglan Street, South Ballarat, Victoria, who sent us the photo., tell the story. "The photo.," he says, "shows the yolk of a gull's egg, which was boiled for breakfast in the



From a Photo. by Richards & Co., Ballarat